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DON RAPHAEL.

VOL. III.

DON RAPHAEL,

A ROMANCE.

BY GEORGE WALKER,

AUTHOR OF THE THREE SPANIARDS, VAGABOND,

POEMS, *&c.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

Now on my ſoul, 'tis what an outrag'd heart,
Like your's, ſhould wiſh!—I ſhould, by heav'n, eſteem it
Moſt exquiſite revenge!

Tancred and Sigismunda.

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DON RAPHAEL.

CHAPTER I.

The Pangs that ſharpeſt ſtung were in my mind;
There deſolation reign'd; and there, cut off
From ſocial life, I felt a conſtant death.

Thomſon.

"THOUGH you ſee me diſguiſed in this ſtrange diſfigurement, and holding no communication with mankind, I am a Grandee of high birth and fortune, and my name would immediately make me known; but this I ſuppreſs, having been long ſuppoſed dead, even by many at the court of Madrid.

"I am the eldeſt ſon of our houſe, and ſince I have retired to this foreſt, my eſtates have all devolved upon my younger brother. He alone is privy to my retirement, and bound to ſecrecy by the poſſeſſion of eſtates he muſt otherwiſe give up.

"I cannot, I dare not touch upon the various incidents which attended the fatal paſſion I entertained for Lady Sempronia. My diſappointment at the preference ſhe gave a man ſo much beneath me, entirely unhinged my reaſon; and moſt certainly, if this misfortune had not overtaken me, I ſhould have executed ſome ſcheme of terrible revenge; and I have been told, that my greateſt flight of phrenzy, when I was chained naked upon a bed of ſtraw, was the fancied action of tearing the Marquis piece-meal; and I muſt acknowledge, that even now, nothing would give me greater pleaſure than to trample him beneath my feet.

"When I recovered from this greateſt of human calamities, (as it levels our nature to

that

that of brutes, or even below them) my favourite amusement was forming schemes to embitter the life of those who had destroyed my happiness; but the Marquis had sufficient prudence to quit the court, and avoid my presence.

"A lady of independent fortune, whose father had been governor of Lima, and whose name was Donna Almedia de Valajos, was left the sole heiress of his immense property, he having died on his passage from America; and her beauty on her arrival at Madrid, became the theme of every tongue. Her riches were the object of universal attraction, and even some Grandees of the Empire, overlooking the obscurity of her birth, offered her their hands. Amongst others was the Count de Pandolfo, younger brother to Mirandula, —a profligate and a spenthrift.

"The circumstance of his being brother to my former rival, determined me to oppose him. In a word, though I had no particular inclination to the lady, I married

her, to be revenged, in ſome degree, upon this hated family; and I felt no little pleaſure in heaping on the head of one brother, the vexations the other had brought on myſelf.

"Perhaps there is not beneath the ſun, a greater folly than for a man to marry a woman with indifference in his heart. If ſhe has beauty, it becomes inſipid; if ſhe has wealth, where is the value to a man who has already more than he can prudently expend? The charms of this lady ſoon ceaſed to pleaſe, and domeſtic life became irkſome, becauſe Almedia had no pride in any accompliſhments but thoſe of her perſon, and ſhe was, of all women, moſt unfit for a companion to me: yet I diſguiſed my indifference, from pride, and all Madrid believed that I was happy. I experienced ſome pleaſure in promoting this opinion, becauſe it leſſened the triumph of the Marquis, and increaſed the chagrin of his brother, whom neceſſity compelled to enter the army.

I had

"I had some inclination myself to re-assume this profession, which I had exercised during my minority, as I hoped it would amuse my attention; but the birth of a son led me from those designs, and bent my thoughts to his education, intending to form him upon a plan of my own, which should inure his body to every fatigue, and his mind to every noble virtue. The malevolence of my star for ever thwarted all my projects, constantly raising up some object to destroy me. I had a friend who had been my fellow soldier, and the sharer of all my secrets. There was nothing, however dear to me, that he did not know, and I valued his councils and company before that of my only brother.

"The name of this man was Alencastro. His family was noble, but he inherited none of the virtues of his ancestors, being deceitful, treacherous, and malicious. His speeches flowed with insinuating mildness, and his external behaviour was a pattern of piety. He knew my indifference to Al-

media, and his treacherous heart ſought to take advantage of theſe circumſtances, which his conſtant intercourſe at my houſe rendered extremely eaſy.

"It was by accident my jealouſy was rouſed, he having ſo ſecurely blinded me, that I ſhould as ſoon have ſuſpected my own brother; but going by chance into a gallery, which led to Almedia's dreſſing room, I ſaw him preſs her hand to his lips; and hearing my ſteps, he turned ſuddenly away in ſome confuſion.

"This incident was like a ſpark of fire, upon dormant combuſtibles, and if I had not with ſome difficulty ſmothered my firſt reſentment, they would both have periſhed on the ſpot. Yet, though I ſuppreſſed the firſt riſings of my rage, it was only that I might have more flagrant conviction, and more powerful ſtimulants to the moſt ſignal revenge my fancy could ſuggeſt. I remembered that it was Alencaſtro, who had firſt prompted me to this union, and negociated

ciated my introduction, and I ſaw no date to my diſhonor.

"My ſon, whom I commanded the nurſe to bring to me every day, became an object of doubt, and his ſmiles could not move me to kindneſs. I examined his features in different points of view, with the moſt gloomy regards, and perſuaded myſelf that he bore a greater reſemblance to Alencaſtro than I.

"'Shall this creature,' ſaid I, 'receive my protection and nurturage? ſhall he become the heir of my eſtates, and call me by the name of father? Shall people look to him as the prop of a noble houſe, hitherto untainted in its lineage, and I not bluſh at the profanation of names, and not ſink into ſhame at the praiſes they will beſtow?'

"'Take him,' ſaid I to the nurſe, 'rear him at my palace, on the banks of the Tagus. Never let him be brought again into my ſight, or his name be pronounced in my preſence.'

"I made no one privy to my ſuſpicions; and without appearing jealous, I myſelf became a ſpy upon their actions. That ſecurity, which ſo often proves fatal to thoſe who have, for any length of time practiſed evil, afforded me more than ſufficient proof of my own dishonor.

"I perceived my wife one evening ſlip into one of the ſervants' apartments; nor was it long before my perfidious friend followed the ſame road. My fury was kindled in an inſtant; I haſtened after him, determined that his blood ſhould waſh out my diſhonor. I found him entangled in his cloaths, and inſtantly ſtabbed him to the heart. He fell upon the bed, ſtreaming in blood, and had ſcarce time to acknowledge the many wrongs he had done me, before he expired.

"I turned from him, to wreak my vengeance upon Almedia, but ſhe had eſcaped, and without giving any alarm to the ſervants, retreated with ſo much ſecreſy and diſpatch, that from that hour to this, I have never

never been able, with the utmoft vigilance, to diſcover her retreat; though ſhe contrived means to receive her private fortune, which I had not power to touch. She knew too well the violence of my diſpoſition, to attempt a reconciliation, or to place herſelf in my way.

"When I reflected that I had committed murder, however excuſable, and that without a witneſs to the provocation, I began to fear that ſome ſcrutiny might take place, from the effects of which, even my power might not protect me, the family of Alencaſtro being conſiderable.

I was obliged to make a confident of a truſty ſervant, who provided me a cheſt, in which the body of this perfidious friend was placed.

I circulated through Madrid, my own diſhonor, by proclaiming the flight of my wife with her paramour, offering very large rewards, for the diſcovery of both, or either. My ſervant Giles, alone was in the ſecret, and to him I truſted the conveyance

of the cheſt to this caſtle, following myſelf ſhortly after.

"The gloomy deſolation every chamber preſented, ſuited the diſpoſition of my mind; the peculiar and romantic ſituation, and above all, the many tales Giles had picked up at Leon, attracted my attention. It was then I conceived the plan, which I afterwards executed. I cauſed a glaſs coffin to be made for the body of Alencaſtro; and to gratify my hatred, I viſited it every day while I remained here, that I might contemplate the progreſs of his decay.

"It was at this time that my acquaintance with that miſcreant Filelfo commenced. Undone by his extravagance, and baniſhed ſociety for his crimes, he had ſought a ſhelter in the thick ſhades of this foreſt, and probably, when he could without danger, he ventured to attack the unprotected traveller. It was ſuch an occaſion brought him to my notice. I was walking one evening alone,

alone, when he ſuddenly ſprang upon me, demanding my money.

I was ſurprized, but I immediately remembered to have had him pointed out to me as a gambler at Madrid, and calling him by his real name, (for that of Filelfo is aſſumed) I requeſted him to pauſe a moment before he proceeded, for I had two ſervants, not twenty paces behind, though the buſhes hid them from ſight.

"He was ſtarted at this intimation, and begging my pardon, inquired by what means I knew him.

"I ſaw at once, that this was the man I ſtood in need of, if I could ſecure his fidelity. This was not difficult, as he knew himſelf in my power; and that, independent of his preſent outrage, I had only to declare his retreat to bring him to puniſhment for many crimes, he having been declared an outlaw, and a reward offered for his perſon, dead or alive.

"I beſtowed upon him ſome preſents, and promiſed him others, if I found him faithful.

'Now,' said I, to myself, 'how will I be amply revenged upon my enemies! Here is a retreat secure from all invasion; this castle contains secret chambers, and tremendous dungeons; from whence, whoever is immersed, can never escape. In one of these, I will confine my faithless wife, with the putrid body of her lover before her. In another, I will secure the person of the Marquis, and their nearest relatives shall never know the termination of their doom.'

"I left my servant with orders to repair the walls, and secretly to furnish the chambers I had marked for my habitation; nor did I fear the prying eye of vulgar curiosity, superstition having drawn an impassable barrier around this place; and it was with difficulty, Giles procured workmen from a distant town, to undertake the labour.

"This castle had been for some years inhabited by an enthusiastic recluse, whose sudden death, as he was exploring the vaults, loaded with putrescent air, gave rise

to

so innumerable absurdities, from which I furnished a tremendous tale, which Fidelio took care to circulate.

I repaired with this man, protected by the appellation of my servant, to Madrid, where he made every possible inquiry after Almedia, employing all the water-carriers in the town, but to no purpose.

You will wonder, no doubt, that a man of my character should be led into measures like these; but yet, after what you have known of me, you must cease to wonder at any thing.

During this period, my spirits were kept in perpetual agitation, the most outrageous extravagancies pleasing me. The son of Almedia haunted me night and day, and I wavered long, as to the manner I should dispose of him: "Shall I suffer this reptile to live," said I, "till he stings me? If he inherits the perfidy of his parents, he will not be held by the ties of gratitude, should I even suffer him to live in obscurity. Better that he should at once die, than for

ever

ever remain an object of hatred and fear. So great was my abhorrence of this wretch, that I should with satisfaction have destroyed him myself; but I had no opportunity, without hazarding detection; and, though I did not regard either the laws, or their punishments; yet to have died for a viper, the offspring of a perfidious villain, would have stung me to the soul. To Fidelfo I delivered this task, and I recollect with what infernal alacrity he received it.

"'There is at this moment in Madrid,' said he, 'a choice spirit; he has been a bravo at Rome, and he was asking me, if I did not know of a job: we can manage the whole with the utmost care, but we shall not be able to appear for some time.'

"I gave him a considerable sum, and they set out for my palace, on the banks of the Tagus. At the dead of night, they broke into the house, and proceeding to the chamber I had marked for them, they silently entered the room. The boy was asleep

asleep in the arms of his faithful nurse, who awoke on the lightest tread, screaming for help, at the sight of two ruffians, who rushed forward to tear her charge from her arms.

"I confess that my soul was shocked at the detail Filelfo wrote me afterwards. The poor girl being murdered by several wounds, as she wrapped the boy in her arms, and both together were thrown from the window into the stream. The servants were alarmed at her cries, and these ruffians escaped with the greatest difficulty from the same window. So daring an outrage created considerable alarm; and though I offered immense rewards for the detection of the offenders, suspicion was raised, that I myself was guilty; and though my rank confined it to rumour, I observed that my company was shunned, and my reception every where cool.

"'I hate, I despise, I detest all mankind,' would I repeat, 'and I will quit them for ever.'

"The

"The body of the nurſe was found the next day, and ſome days after, part of the boy's dreſs, and a handful of his hair; his mangled body being, no doubt, entangled amongſt the rocks.

"The rapidity with which I had been ſtimulated from one crime to another, left no time for remorſe; but now, when I had ſatiated my revenge, my mind became tortured with doubt. I became abſorbed in the moſt gloomy melancholy, and my countenance too certainly informed the world of the troubles that preyed upon me. I recollected the many infantine careſſes, the ſweet ſmiles, and the ſchemes I had formed for this boy; and I would have given my domains, again to have reſtored him to life.

In this ſituation I was found by my ſervant Giles, on his return from fitting up the caſtle. I heard his arrangements with gloomy ſatisfaction. 'Giles,' ſaid I, 'you know the reaſon I have for hating life. You know that I am the moſt miſerable of human

human beings, and that neither power, nor riches, nor friendship, nor love, nor family connexions, link me to ſociety! You are an orphan and a widower, and the world to you can have very little value. What ſay you? Will you quit it with me, and live in all the ſolitude, which nature and retirement can give?'

'Moſt willingly, your Excellenza,' replied Giles, 'provided you will not ſuffer a woman to come near us. All miſchief riſes from them.'

'From that time Giles became more my companion than ſervant; and having turned over all my eſtabliſhments, I retired to this caſtle by ſo diſtant a route, that no one knew of my retreat, and it was believed, that I had died ſuddenly on a journey.'

'I had not been long ſettled here, before a companion of Fileſſo's, the ſame whom you ſaw buried the night of your arrival here, came to inform me that Fileſſo had ſecreted himſelf in Catalonia; that for a ſum

ſum of money they would leave Spain for ever, and undertake to do me noble juſtice before their departure, by deſtroying both the Marquis and his lady. My heart ſhuddered at this infernal propoſition.

"The fire of my reſentment had been extinguiſhed in the blood of my own family. I ſtrictly charged them not to injure an hair of their heads; but if they deſigned to ſerve me, to convey to Filelfo's cottage one of the daughters of the Marquis, which ſhould be moſt like her mother. Accident conducted Cornelia to his power, and ſtrange as it may appear, the paſſion I had had for the mother, I now placed upon the infant daughter, and with a degree of romantic madneſs, conceived the deſign of educating her, at ſome future period to be my wife; fondly hoping, that never knowing any other, her affections would all centre upon myſelf. I conſidered my marriage with Almedia as completely ſet aſide, and had ſufficient influence to procure a diſpenſation from the court of Rome,

Rome, when Cornelia should arrive at ſufficient age. How are all my projects blaſted? How am I become the ſubject of perpetual malediction? No plan that I form ſucceeds. It appears as if the judgment of heaven hung upon me! And that like Cain, I am become a mark for vengeance! My ſervant Giles, died ſome years ſince.——But I find, Lorenzo, ſo much miſery crowding upon my ſoul, that I cannot proceed.——Some other time——"

He ſtarted up at theſe words, and ſtruggling to conceal the tears which ſwelled to his eyes, he darted out of the room, not however forgetting to turn the key upon me.

I remained for ſome time abſorbed in reflection. The ſufferings of Don Raphael excited my pity, but it was difficult to ſay whether he was more a madman than a high ſpirit fighting with misfortune. I lamented the fatality which had brought me

me within the circle of his power, and from which I ſaw no means of eſcape.

Would any other man have entertained a project ſo abſurd as that of rearing a child to become his wife? Did he forget that years would change his countenance, and time deſtroy the ſmoothneſs of his forehead? Did he know ſo little of the ſex, after ſuffering the ſlights of Sempronia, and the treachery of Almeda, as not to know the powers of external appearance; and that a man more young, and more gay than himſelf, might deſtroy, in one inſtant, all the labour of years? Alas, how truly has this been exemplified! The very innocence and ignorance of Cornelia contributed to diſappoint his aim, and diſſolve the illuſion of many felicities. What man then ſhall, hereafter, plan ſchemes which depend upon the inclinations or affections of the fair? a foundation of ſand would be more ſecure. But why do I reproach *them* with inconſtancy or want of diſcernment, when ourſelves are

equally

equally erroneous, and equally fickle. Love is a phantom of imagination, created in the mind by the reflection of a pleaſing object—an object which ſtrikes us in a powerful manner; and we inſtantly decorate it with all the fancied perfection with which we wiſh the partner of our choice to be endowed.

Can we wonder if this ſame object ſees with different eyes, and fancies that another poſſeſſes thoſe qualifications ſhe herſelf is ſeeking after?

Sould we then upon rejection fly into thoſe extremes which Don Raphael indulged, as if we had received ſome capital injuries; when in fact it is only our pride that is hurt: for where is the man, or where is the woman, who does not imagine himſelf or herſelf equal to the object in view? Who does not think rejection an inſufferable affront to their ſelf-love?

It is thence ariſes that ardour of purſuit which will not be overcome—that deep reſentment when a rival is preferred—becauſe

cauſe it is a declaration of our inferiority: a declaration of all others the leaſt to be brooked by that haughty and imperious animal—man.

Ah! thought I, had I reaſoned in this manner formerly, all might have been well. I ſhould have married Chriſtiana, who in ſo many accompliſhments is ſuperior to her ſiſter, and Don Raphael might, unrivalled, have inſpired Cornelia with thoſe ſentiments, her reſpect for him as a father, would for ever have baniſhed.

How calmly and judiciouſly do we reaſon when we have not the power to alter circumſtances. It is then that paſſion no longer clouds our intellects, and we perceive every thing that we ought to have done; but till this period arrives, we might as well attempt to argue with a ſtorm, or repel the wind with our breath, as to turn a man from his purpoſe. Thus it is that the wiſdom and experience of ages will never make wiſe the preſent generations of the earth.

You

You must excuse my recounting to you my reflections, since I had no other mode of amuſement; and fortunate it was, that my mind found a never-failing ſource of employment within itſelf, which ſet at defiance the impregnable walls of the caſtle, and ſoared free and unconfined over all matter, and through all ſpace.

It is almoſt incredible that after this ſingular viſit, and ſtrange confidence of Don Raphael, more than a month elapſed without his once ſpeaking to me. He then paid me another viſit equally abrupt, and without touching upon any circumſtance of our mutual misfortunes, he entered into a long diſquiſition upon philoſophical ſubjects; and I more than once ſaid to myſelf, "Can this indeed be Don Raphael?"

I was charmed with the profundity of his thoughts; and from the faſcinating manner of his expreſſions, I felt the ſame deſire of friendſhip ariſing, which at firſt ſo powerfully attracted me. "How much

is

is it to be lamented," said I, after his departure, "that he should poſſeſs two characters ſo extremely oppoſite. His underſtanding is elegant, his ſentiments are poliſhed, but his paſſions are a whirlwind accompanied by fire."

After this converſation, Don Raphael ſeemed to take increaſed pleaſure in my company. I carefully avoided touching on thoſe ſubjects that might lead us to jar, with the diſtant expectation, that time might relax his rigour; and if once he permitted me the range of the caſtle, I ſhould eaſily find means to eſcape. But how little did I know him to entertain ſuch a hope; for after three months, when I ventured to hint that my health ſuffered from the heat of the weather and the want of air, his countenance changed, and ſtarting up, he left me without uttering a word; nor was it till he had puniſhed me ſome weeks with his uſual ſilent viſits, that he condeſcended to become again familiar.

Thus

Thus, with intervals of calm, and ſeaſons of ſtorm, the days glided away, and the long nights of a ſecond winter cloſed upon me.

I dared not to make any inquiries concerning the ſtate of things in the world; nor would I ſhew, by impatience, that I felt the galling bondage that oppreſſed me.

THE gloom of the weather inspired us with gloomy subjects, when we met. The wretchedness of man, the transience of his existence, the certainty of his death, and the uncertainty of his future state, were exhaustless themes; and as if we had not in our own individual misfortunes sufficient subject for melancholy, we were for ever conjuring up dark ideas, till superstition had acquired the ascendant, and the mind enfeebled, started at a sound.

It was in those dispositions, that I trembled at the midnight breezes, which sighed as they entered my cell; where, cheerless and alone, I lay upon a bed of straw, and

moanings

moanings of the winter's wind acroſs the mountains, ſeemed like the complaints of ſpirits in the air.

And why, thought I, may it not be given to thoſe etherial forms, to wing the realms of ſpace, and viſit inviſibly the planets of many worlds? Our religion does not forbid us to think; for it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive the ſituation or happineſs of celeſtial ſpirits.

Thoſe flights of imagination often led me ſo far, that I was tempted to believe that ſupernatural ſounds wandered through the caſtle; and for ſeveral nights, I amuſed myſelf with liſtening to the fleeting noiſes, which in theſe ancient buildings a breath of wind may cauſe.

One night the wind was unuſually loud. The tempeſt was turbulent without, and I felt the beams of the caſtle move beneath me as I lay. Sleep was a ſtranger to me, and I traced over from my firſt remembrance the variations of my fate.

The wind roared along the turrets of the caſtle, and I fancied that ſome ſtones were ſhaken from the building by the noiſe I heard. After a few minutes, all again became ſilent. I liſtened to the wind as it blew in guſts, or ſighed gently my window, till I fancied that I could hear the diſtant ſound of footſteps.

Surely, thought I, Don Raphael will not viſit me at this late hour; perhaps he fears the ſtorm will approach this building, and bury us in its ruins. Again the wind ſhook the tower, and liſtening attentively, I became almoſt certain, that ſome ſtep moved near me; a deep ſigh convinced me I was not deceived. I raiſed my head from beneath the pall, which in this cold weather I uſed as a coverlid; but all again remained ſilent, except the wind, which died away, to riſe with greater fury. Suddenly I perceived a ray of light dart through the darkneſs of my dungeon; the black hangings facing me, were cautiouſly lifted up, and a female in mourning robes, holding

holding a dim lamp, moved forward, with a flow and doubting pace. My attention was rivetted to this aſtoniſhing viſitant, with fear and wonder. The viſion looked round with a cautious ſcrutiny, and fear ſeemed ſtrongly impreſſed upon the pale features of its face, which I fancied bore ſome reſemblance to Donna Chriſtiana.

I refrained almoſt from breathing, that I might not cauſe this beautiful ſhape to vaniſh; and wondering what could be the purport of this viſit, I endeavoured to collect my reaſon to my aſſiſtance. This figure pauſed for a moment, and ſeemed breathing forth a mental prayer; then ſlowly moving into the room, it ſtarted at the ſight of the black pall, covered over the body of a man, whoſe face was nearly as pale as its own. Then ſlowly ſtooping to read the characters, it ſighed forth the name of Lorenzo, and immediately fell to the ground.

I ſtarted up, being now convinced that what I beheld was no ſpectre; and ſtepping

as I always did, in my cloaths. I ran first to preserve the lamp, which was nearly expiring, and then hastened to satisfy myself in the reality of this extraordinary visitor, who had so strongly reminded me of Christiana.

I found so little spirit remaining in this beautiful body, that I feared it had fled for ever; and pressing her in my arms, I endeavoured to recall her to life, by every endearing name; for however I was to account for her appearance, I was now certain it was indeed Christiana. I was little less surprized, that she should be yet alive, and find means to enter my chamber, than if it had in fact been the celestial spirit of this amiable maid.

The small quantity of water which remained in my pitcher, contributed to her recovery, and after some time, she began to recollect her situation.

"Lorenzo," said she, in a murmuring voice, "do you then live? I thought just now, you had been dead, and the garments

of

of the grave over you. But are you not a prisoner like myself?"

"Can it be possible, my beloved friend," said I, "that you are confined in this castle? By what right does Don Raphael detain you?"

"By the right of power and of outrage," replied she. "I have been kept in this dismal place, since the time that you left me at Leon; when I supposed my father had sent two ruffians to conduct me to Portugal. But I did him injustice; they were the agents of this terrible Don Raphael, and they conducted me hither."

"Was Don Raphael one of those ruffians?"

"No," answered she. "He met us upon the road, and it was plain from the anger he expressed, that some mistake had been committed. He appeared struck with astonishment at first seeing me, making many inquiries of the men which I did not hear, and apparently with very great interest. The little trunk which these men

had brought with them he opened upon the ground by torch-light, and no ſooner glanced his eye upon the letters, than he cloſed the box, and after ſpeaking a few words with great agitation, to one of theſe men, whom I heard him call Filelfo, he mounted and rode with the other towards the city.

"Filelfo conducted me to this caſtle, where a poor frightened old woman, he called dame Sylvia, was ordered to attend me; but, poor creature, ſhe had more occaſion for attendance herſelf; being ſo ill, that ſhe was, evidently, near death.

"I was conducted to the chamber in the tower beneath this, and dame Sylvia appointed to attend me. Fortunately ſhe had ſupplied me with a liberal allowance of proviſions, for ſhe came no more, and Don Raphael has ſince informed me that ſhe died ſuddenly the next day.

"I knew not the danger I was in of remaining ſhut up till I died of hunger; till on the ſecond day I was ſurprized by the entrance

entrance of Don Raphael. I had only ſeen his figure faintly by torch-light; but now the grief, horror, and rage, which was printed on his dark features, inſpired me with the greateſt fear. He ſat down, and aſſuming an air of kindneſs, apologiſed for the violence of his people, aſking me a thouſand queſtions. I anſwered him without anger, requeſting him, ſince it was a miſtake, to permit my return."

"'Lady,' replied he, 'that is not in my power to grant. Every thing but liberty you may aſk of me.---Your table ſhall be ſupplied with all that the ſeaſons can beſtow---muſic and books ſhall be at your command: and if you pleaſe in my company to taſte the freſh air of my gardens, I ſhall be happy to attend you. It is the deſtiny of providence which has brought you hither, to ſupply to me the place of your ſiſter.'

"You may believe that I was not a little ſurpriſed at this aſſertion, replying

that till then he was under a miſtake, for that I had no ſiſter.'

'To your knowledge perhaps,' replied he; 'but you had a ſiſter, though her crimes have brought her to the grave. Yes, lady Chriſtiana, I know you, and your family. The fate of the Marquis, your father, is in my hands. In this caſtle your ſiſter Cornelia was reared from infancy by my care, but ſhe fled from me to the arms of an impoſtor—a wretch without a name. It was her I expected to find when I found you. I have ſince ſeen her, but it was in the arms of death—the conſequence of her crimes.'

'I cannot repeat to you, Lorenzo, half that he ſaid to me; nor all the ſingularities of his behaviour. He has kept me here near two years, under a confinement as light as was conſiſtent with that name, and treated me with as much kindneſs as if I were his own daughter. When the weather is fine he permits me in his company or his ſight to amuſe myſelf in the gardens.

gardens. He provides me all the poems and romances that Madrid produces; and he sometimes listens to my poor performances on the guitar, till the tears will roll down his cheeks, and he will then fly from my presence. Yet with all this he never will attend to my request of liberty."

"Don Raphael," replied I without comment on this narrative, "is the most extraordinary of men. With so much care, how have you been able to find the means of entering the chamber? Had you any knowledge that I was detained here as a prisoner like yourself, though treated with much more rigor?"

"No," replied she, "I have never seen any other than himself, nor has he once hinted to me, that any one else was within the castle. It was, perhaps, more than accident that has conducted me hither.

"The room which I inhabit, beneath this, is larger and better furnished; but it is hung round with old tapestry, so destroyed by

by time and damp, that it can scarce support its own weight.

I have been frequently alarmed by a difmal grating noife, when the wind has been loud, fomething like the low working of a file, and my mind has often given way to fuperftitious apprehenfions.

This night, when the wind raged with unufual fury, and fwept howling acrofs the fret-work of this gothic old caftle, I was afraid to fleep, left I fhould be buried in the ruins. The fame grating noife filled me with a thoufand fears, and I almoft expected to fee fome unufual form fteal from behind the hangings, whence the found came. On a fudden the wind roared with unufual fury, and was followed by a tremendous crafh, as if fome part of the building had fallen. At that moment the hangings were rent from the top to the bottom, a door flew open, and a large ftone rolled into my room. At firft I was fo terrified, and my heart beat fo violently, that I thought I fhould faint; but recollecting

myfelf,

myſelf, I conſidered that the ſounds I had ſo often heard, muſt have been occaſioned by the moving of this door on its ruſty hinges; and it was evident the fall of this ſtone down a narrow ſtaircaſe had forced it open, with a violence that had torn down the hangings. I ſummoned all the courage I poſſeſſed, and recommending myſelf to the power which has hitherto protected me, I took up my lamp, and began to explore this ſtaircaſe, the fabric of the caſtle ſhaking beneath me. On one of the ſteps I found the blade of a ſword, probably broken in ſome ſkirmiſh.

"The flight of narrow ſtairs were only capable of admitting one perſon at a time. They commenced in my chamber, and terminated with a door faſtened by bars ſo ruſty, that they were half eaten through, and required only a little care not to make a noiſe.

"I was about to retreat at the ſight of the crucifix, and the coffin, which filled me with fearful apprehenſions; but conſider-

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beg that I should perhaps never have an opportunity like the present; I ventured to raise the curtain—but, holy virgin, I shudder now at the horror that thrilled through every vein, when I perceived the body of some person stretched upon the floor, and covered with a black pall. But when I read your name it was too much to be endured, and your voice alone could have brought me to life."

At these words she remained silent, turning her eyes upon me with that look which always gave her face such inexpressible intelligence.

"Christiana," said I, "this is, perhaps, the only opportunity that will ever occur for our escape from the power of this relentless man. In the morning he must certainly discover the damage done to the tapestry in your apartment, and this communication will be again closed. Lend me the lamp, and while you remain here I will examine if no other passage can be found."

I took

I took the lamp, carefully examining the wall as I descended, but no other opening appeared, till I was turning into Christiana's apartment, when I found that to the right opened another door, but this was fastened on the outside.

Hope was not now to be destroyed by trifling obstacles. I hastily ascended again, arming myself with the sword blade, which lay upon the stairs, and which I proposed to use in cutting through the door.

Christiana attended me, and not fearing any interruption from Don Raphael at this midnight hour, I began to labour, the storm without concealing the noise I was obliged to make. It was more than an hour before I succeeded in cutting an opening sufficient to admit my hand, and then with much labour I so loosened the old rusty bolts, that in an hour more we had another flight of stairs before us.

With great caution we ventured to descend, not knowing into what place we might

might be led. I almoſt ſickened at the ſight of another door, terminating theſe ſtairs; but fortunately it was locked in the inſide, and with very little difficulty I thruſt back the bolt. Chriſtiana carried the lamp, preſerving her compoſure with admirable reſolution, fortified by her entire dependence upon the protection of heaven. We now found ourſelves in a ſmall apartment, the four ſides of which were ſtone; no other door was viſible but that by which we entered; and ſtrong ſtaples in the walls informed us, without words, of the purpoſe of the place.

There was no window in this dungeon, but I was ſatisfied we could not be ſo ſoon under ground, my chamber being on the third ſtory. Upon the floor lay a ladder broken in two, and I conſidered that it was poſſible this might have once been the means of entrance.

I raiſed the light above my head, to examine the roof, which was low, and formed of unpoliſhed planking; and after a mi-

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nute ſurvey, Chriſtiana pointed out to me the appearance of a trap-door, but how to aſcend to it was a difficult talk, and I was obliged to leave Chriſtiana in the dark, while I returned to my own room for the pall, which, cut into ſhreds, ſerved to tie the ladder. It was ſo rotten, that I feared it would break beneath my weight, but there was no choice, nor any other chance for eſcape. I planted it againſt the wall, and was about to endeavour to raiſe the trap-door, when I heard the ſound of a ſtep above me. My ſpirits ſo much forſook me, at this unexpected accident, that I had difficulty to prevent myſelf falling from the ladder; and Chriſtiana, paler than before, trembled without power of ſpeech.

All again remained profoundly ſilent, for in this place, even the wind was unheard; and after waiting ſome time, I determined to venture every thing, in hopes that I had been deceived by the noiſe of the ſtorm. I ventured gently to raiſe the trap-door, and had nearly let it fall again,

with

with a noiſe that would have deſtroyed us, at perceiving a light in the room above. My motions did not ſeem to have given alarm, and hoping that ſleep might have cloſed the vigilance of whoever might be there, I ventured to take a more exact ſurvey of the chamber; but my eyes had not traced half round the room, before they were fixed upon an object, that ſhocked my ſoul, and filled my mind with agony.

I beheld Don Raphael himſelf upon his knees, his lips moving as in fervent devotion; and his eyes wildly fixed upon a putrid body, which was incloſed in a glaſs coffin.

I was ſo much ſhocked at the firſt ſight of this dreadful object, that I did not remember what Don Raphael had told me of the faithleſs Alencaſtro; and not daring to ſtir or ſpeak to Chriſtiana, who ſtood beneath me with the lamp, I remained gazing on the object before me.

Don

Don Raphael in a few moments caught the light that reflected from the floor, and breaking from his devotion in confusion, he started up, gazing upon me with a look of horror and fear, such as I had never before seen expressed on his features.

This was not a moment for hesitation, and I immediately advanced.------

"Who, or whatever thou art," said he, in a solemn tone, "know that I am Don Raphael, and fear thee not. What then, is the purport of thy errand?"

I remained silent, with my eyes fixed upon him, that Christiana might have time to follow me.

"Is thy message speechless?" said he, "or art thou come from the infernal regions, to witness my remorse, and my repentance of a crime I have never ceased to regret. If so, thou mayest return, and report that thou hast seen me---me, Don Raphael, kneeling before the remains of my enemy, and performing the annual

deed

deed of my penance? Hast thou any other message? Speak!——

I was astonished at the intrepidity of his manner; and not less so, at his not recollecting me.

"Don Raphael," said I, endeavouring to imitate his firmness. "My message is, that you immediately proceed to the grave of your infamous instrument, in the court-yard, and there——

"What?" cried he, "What?—Ha!—Lorenzo!—by the Great God of Eternity it is you! How were mine eyes deceived? Return, instantly return! or you will not have the power.—What! Christiana too! How is this? But you will neither of you escape! No!" added he, with a sarcastic smile. "Were I to leave you in this chamber, with this personification of death for your companion; you could never escape! Innumerable doors, with innumerable bolts, yet confine you; and never, never, can you return. I have sworn it before this body, and before that cross!"

"Don

"Don Raphael," replied I, "listen for a moment to your own inconsistency. Have I not but now found you kneeling, and praying to heaven, for the pardon of a crime; the instigation to which was an excuse? Yet you scruple not to continue in the practice of greater crimes than that! Who has given to you power over the persons of your fellows? and by what claim do you deprive us of liberty? Permit us then to depart, and your own heart must receive its reward, in the tranquillity it will then enjoy."

"Impossible," replied he. "The man who leaps from a rock, must descend; though he be dashed to pieces——he cannot return. Do you think, that after I have confessed to you my crimes; after I have acknowledged to you, that I have been guilty of murder with my own hands, and by my instructions; that I would ever suffer you to enter the world, to blazon my actions, and impeach me at a public tribunal! No---Never---Here you shall live, till death

death dissolves my power. Had you been as guilty as myself, I might have permitted you to escape; for your criminality would have been my protection.

"Then murder is to be the price of my liberty," cried I. "Be it so, Don Raphael! Thou shalt die!"

Leaping suddenly upon him, with the frenzy of indignation at his barbarous coolness, I raised the sword blade to his face; his hand seized the handle of his poniard, which he struggled powerfully to unsheath, and in the struggle, we both fell to the ground. Fortunately, I disentangled myself from his grasp, and without reflection, thrust him down the trap-door, which I closed upon him, immediately securing this unexpected success, by heaping several articles of furniture above the opening.

I seized the trembling Christiana by the hand, and opening the door of this chamber, hurried her through several others, till

we entered a bed-room, adorned with several little drawings in water colours.

"This has been the chamber of some female," said Christiana, "by the decorations, and who knows but it was the prison of my unfortunate sister!—Heavens, Lorenzo, what is the matter with you? Did you know my sister?"

"When we have a fitter opportunity," replied I, sighing and looking hastily around, "I will tell you.—We have not a moment to lose.—If Don Raphael is not much hurt by his fall, he, doubtless, has the key of your chamber; and knowing, as he does, the labyrinths of this building, may be round upon us before we are yet free."

The next chamber that we entered was the bed-room of Don Raphael, where I armed myself with the dagger which had once so nearly been fatal to him; and having unbarred the door, we hastened through the echoing, and dark winding passages, and at length once more breathed the free air of the heavens.

The ſtorm continued to rage, accompanied with ſnow, and the wind ranged at liberty through the leafleſs foreſt. How different this from the laſt time of my flight with Cornelia, when all nature ſeemed to welcome us with luſtre, and we were almoſt tempted to linger amidſt its beauties. The froſt was ſo keen, and the wind ſo high, that after ſo long a confinement we had ſcarce ſtrength to move through the ſnow, which lay in drifts, and rendered the foreſt extremely dangerous. We had alſo to fear that Don Raphael would infallibly trace us by our ſteps; and to increaſe our deſpair, we were ſo bewildered in this trackleſs wild, that I knew not whether we were purſuing the way to the mountains or the plains.

"I am ſo ill," ſaid Chriſtiana, panting with exertion, and leaning upon me, "that I am certain I cannot proceed much further. I fear we ſhall be either ſmothered with the ſnow, or frozen to death. Ah! I know not which was moſt terrible—that night

night of our flight from home, with all the horrors of war behind us, or this. That was the beginning of ſorrow, and 'tis likely this will be the ending."

I endeavoured to inſpire her with a hope I did not poſſeſs; and more dead than alive, we ſaw the diſmal dawning of a winter's day, without a track to lead us or a ſhelter to protect. The wind was dropped, the ſnow ceaſed, and the ſun glittering upon the foreſt, diſplayed a thouſand refractions.

We were very diſtant from the right road to Leon, but now that the ſun cheared us with its rays; the cold enabled us to purſue our way: and by about noon we reached an obſcure inn, were we found reſt and refreſhment.

The ſame night we reached Leon, in a country dreſs, and in company with ſome common carriers, who had reſted at our inn, and following their courſe, we took up our abode in the city, in a quarter diſtant from that where I was known.

I ſent a meſſenger the next day to the houſe of the widow where I had formerly reſided, and where many of my things remained, but ſhe was dead, and the houſe in poſſeſſion of others. I learnt the Catalonian inſurrection was ſuppreſſed, and the independance of Portugal eſtabliſhed. The regiment, to which I of right belonged, was removed to Madrid; and ſo many changes had taken place, in this ſhort period, that I ſeemed to myſelf as if riſing from the dead to viſit another generation.

I dared not hazard any inquiry concerning the Marquis de Miranduła, never venturing from the houſe; and it was then I determined to diſcloſe to Chriſtiana the whole of my ſtory; when ſhe would learn that her unfortunate ſiſter had engaged my heart, and received my hand, though death had divided us for ever.

This detail took up ſome time, and Chriſtiana attended to my words with a ſilence and intereſt equal to that of a criminal in expectation of the final ſentence.

When

When I had ended ſhe uttered a deep ſigh; and wiping away thoſe tears that had frequently ſtarted from her eyes, ſhe endeavoured to conceal her emotion.

"How particularly unfortunate has been our family," ſaid ſhe. "The loſs of this dear and unknown ſiſter imbittered to my mother the brighteſt days of her proſperity; and when ſhe was ſo near diſcovering this long loſt daughter death united them in a better world. A wretched confuſion of politics has ſunk our houſe from ſplendor, into utter ruin and poverty. My father, if living, is an exile; and I---I am alone with none to pity me."

"That expreſſion," ſaid I, taking her hand, "is unkind. You know, Chriſtiana, that I more than pity you."

"I know it," returned ſhe, trembling, at the ſame time withdrawing her hand and concealing her face. "But---but---I know not what I would ſay. This I know, I am completely wretched."

Her words and deep ſighing grieved me to the ſoul. "O, heavens!" ſaid I, internally, "that I could take up the reſolution of offering myſelf to this amiable girl. But how can I offer her profeſſions I have this moment told her were only made with ſincerity to her ſiſter? True it is ſhe no longer lives, but love has not expired in my boſom."

During theſe reflections we both remained in the moſt embarraſſing ſilence: then ſuddenly withdrawing her hand from her face, "Lorenzo," ſaid ſhe, with a firm though mournful voice; "my irrevocable determination is now taken, and which I will not change. Liſten to me then with patience, for you ſhall not long be troubled with me. I am certain that you have already penetrated the ſecret which my lips faulter to diſcloſe. You have indirectly told me more than once that you are not ignorant of my regard: but I knew not the reaſons you had to treat me with cool politeneſs. I have now no further deſire

to

to live, than once more to ſee my father, and to-morrow morning I will enter a cloiſter, that I may hence-forward look to that ſtate where the heart ſhall be no more torn with paſſion, and the beating pulſe ſhall reſt."

"Chriſtiana," replied I, ſcarce knowing what I ſaid, "would to heaven it were in my power to prevent your reſolution; if it were to make you happy."

"What ſhall I ſay?---You know my ſituation; I myſelf intend retiring to the ſtill and peaceful ſhades of a monaſtry; and to my laſt hour, I ſhall remember you with more than gratitude, with more than friendſhip; with a fervent and holy love."

I embraced her at theſe words. My reſolution wavered, and I ſhould have offered her my hand, in ſpite of the difficulties that ſurrounded us: for in thoſe moments, I almoſt fancied my love for her ſiſter was transferred to herſelf; had not her ſuſceptible feelings totally overcame her; and

darting from my arms, she flew to give vent to her sensations in her own room.

On the following day, I received by the hands of our hostess, a tender letter of farewell, she wanting resolution to see me any more. She had formed a retreat in the same sanctuary, where her mother's remains were deposited, and I spared both her and myself the confusion of another interview.

Alone and cheerless, I looked upon the world as a boundless ocean, where I might be tossed about for ever, by every wind of adversity; and recollecting that father Timotheus might possibly have escaped on that fatal night, which threw me into the power of Don Raphael, I determined to seek for him at Toledo, after I should have been at Madrid, where I hoped to gain the protection of my early friend, and by his means to clear up my character as a soldier, before I sought to establish myself.

I no longer desired to find myself allied to the great. I wished only to be allowed to live independent and obscure, and to claim

claim an equal ſecurity from the laws of my country, with the reſt of my fellow creatures, which at preſent was ſo far from the caſe, that I dared not venture into the ſtreets by day-light, and trembled at any ſound, leſt Don Raphael ſhould have diſcovered me.

I diſguiſed myſelf in a low attire, leaving Leon in company with a troop of muleteers, who were carrying various merchandize, and ſome days ſince arrived in this city. I procured a lodging at the houſe of a poor woman, in a dirty ſtreet; remaining at home, without even venturing to ſend a meſſage to you of my exiſtence.

Laſt night was the firſt time I ventured to traverſe theſe ſtreets; it was then, as if fortune had determined, that my life ſhould be crowded with ſingularities, that I was the means of running away with your miſtreſs; and afterwards having diſguiſed myſelf in thoſe monkiſh robes, which ſo well became me, of receiving the confeſſion of a dying lady, which was to me one

of the moſt intereſting accidents of my life, and which cannot but ſtrike you with ſurprize, when I tell you, that this lady was no other, than Almedia, the guilty wife of Don Raphael. I have informed you of the miſtake which occaſioned my introduction to the bedſide of this lady; who, after all the ſervants were withdrawn, beſought me to repeat to her ſeveral prayers, after which, ſhe appeared more compoſed.

"Liſten, reverend father," ſaid ſhe, "to the laſt confeſſion of a dying ſinner, and pray that the Almighty may not puniſh to the uttermoſt, my offences, for they are many; and I fear that it is now too late to make an earthly retribution."

"Be comforted daughter," ſaid I, "our faith teaches us, that there is joy in heaven at the repentance of a ſinner.---He who died for ſinners, will not refuſe to hear."

She anſwered only with a groan, and after a few minutes, gathering more ſtrength, ſhe continued------

But

But, my dear Count, the clock ſtrikes two; it was the ſame hour laſt night, when I heard this important confeſſion. It is the hour that I have been ſummoned again to attend; and if you knew the extreme intereſt I have in this affair, you would not wonder that I cannot delay it.

Here Lorenzo abruptly aroſe, having brought his long narrative down to his arrival in Madrid, and to which the Count liſtened with attention and indignation. Then taking the hand of his early friend, he aſſured him of his ſervices, and offered himſelf to attend him.

Lorenzo declined this offer as unneceſſary.

"I ſuſpect," ſaid he, "from the words of your ſervant, that it was father Timotheus who ſent me the note, and I certainly have nothing to fear from Don Raphael, in the houſe of his wife."

"I hope it may be ſo," anſwered the Count, "I have conſiderable deſire to ſee this ſtrange character, whoſe vindictive

ſpirit has brought him to Madrid. I ſuſpect, however, that he has not all that power and authority he aſſumes, or why ſhould he take up his abode in one of the meaneſt ſtreets in this city?"

Lorenzo ſhook his head; but having no time to loſe, he haſtily departed.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

TO the intricate ſtreets of Madrid, Lorenzo was wholly a ſtranger; and it was with the greateſt difficulty he could diſcover, at this hour, that to which he had been conducted the preceding night, nor could he inquire for it by deſcription, the ſtreets being deſerted by paſſengers.

It was but at very diſtant intervals that a ſolitary lantern, ſhed its twinkling light, and he began to fear that he ſhould not only miſs the appointment, but be unable to diſcover the houſe where he had heard this important confeſſion. After paſſing ſeveral ſtreets, he entered one which he believed to be that he ſought, and obſerving

of Madrid (that is to be) with becoming attention."

The company, at theſe words, aroſe, and with over-ſtrained compliments and burleſqued civility, welcomed Lorenzo, who demanded the nature of the ſervice they required.

"'Tis neither more nor leſs," replied one of them, "than to unite in holy matrimony a gentleman of our company to an honeſt lady, whom he has long admired: but as he is a devil of a fellow, you had better be maſked, leſt he ſhould know you hereafter and play you ſome ſcurvy trick."

"But if he is enamoured of the Lady," ſaid Lorenzo.

"Hold there;" cried one. "We are not going to diſpute:—We deteſt controverſy, father—depend upon it we have reaſon. Here is a maſk for your reverence, and a glaſs of good wine to waſh out your ſcruples."

Lorenzo clearly ſaw, that without diſcovering himſelf, or performing the ceremony

mony required, he ſhould not be able to extricate himſelf from this adventure: and knowing that he would have power at any time to nullify the action, which he ſuppoſed was compulſatory, at leaſt on the part of the gentleman, he put on the maſk, and ſignified his readineſs to obey them.

One of the Cavaliers then threw open the door to an interior apartment, the whole company following. On a ſopha ſat a gentleman, maſked, with two men near, careleſsly playing with their ſwords, but Lorenzo, was not a little ſurprized to find in the lady, the perſon of Ippolita.

"Proceed, Reverend Father," cried one of the men, in a taunting tone, "make two people happy, and bind them as faſt as holy Mother Church can do for the life of her."

Lorenzo, with difficulty, avoided betraying himſelf during this ſcene, and fearing to be detected by Ippolita, he hurried over the ceremony in a voice almoſt inarticulate. The ſervice was ſcarcely

read

read over, when ſeveral of them ſhouted aloud, "Long life to Lady Pandolfo, and may the Count enjoy many years felicity."

"Is it credible," ſaid Lorenzo, to himſelf, "that the Count ſhould at length be brought, by any means, to marry a woman of this deſcription, and how much more incredible that I ſhould be the inſtrument of a puniſhment, which before the event of laſt night, would have given me pleaſure."

The ſame perſon who had introduced him, now lighted him to the door, and preſented him with a ſmall preſent; at the ſame time thanking him for his ready compliance with their humour.

As Lorenzo turned from the door, he was accoſted by a monk of another order, who inquired if he had come from that houſe, and if a ſick lady had been confeſſing. Lorenzo ſmiled, at this ſimilarity of incidents, replying, that he himſelf had entered the houſe upon an errand almoſt ſimilar, and had been under the neceſſity of repeating over the marriage ceremony.

"It

"It is a famous gambling houſe," replied his new acquaintance, "but we cannot refuſe, you know, brother, doing a deed of charity, let the object be ever ſo unworthy. Your adventure reminds me of what happened to myſelf only laſt night. I was returning about half paſt one o'clock, from adminiſtering extreme unction to a poor gentleman juſt in the emergency of death; when a lady, ſwiftly running, and in extreme agitation, caught me by the arm. 'Protect me, holy father,' cried ſhe, ſeveral times, ſtill panting for breath. 'Be calm, lady,' ſaid I, 'no harm can happen to you while in my care.' 'Ah, father,' ſaid ſhe weeping, 'I cannot be calm. I am an unworthy creature; I have within this hour fled from my father, whom I have killed; and I am going to hide myſelf for ever in ſome convent.' 'But ſurely you have not been guilty of ſo enormous an offence againſt God and man, as the murder of your own father,' ſaid I. 'My diſobedience has been the cauſe of his

of the moſt intereſting accidents of my life, and which cannot but ſtrike you with ſurprize, when I tell you, that this lady was no other, than Almedia, the guilty wife of Don Raphael. I have informed you of the miſtake which occaſioned my introduction to the bedſide of this lady; who, after all the ſervants were withdrawn, beſought me to repeat to her ſeveral prayers, after which, ſhe appeared more compoſed.

"Liſten, reverend father," ſaid ſhe, "to the laſt confeſſion of a dying ſinner, and pray that the Almighty may not puniſh to the uttermoſt, my offences, for they are many; and I fear that it is now too late to make an earthly retribution."

"Be comforted daughter," ſaid I, "our faith teaches us, that there is joy in heaven at the repentance of a ſinner.---He who died for ſinners, will not refuſe to hear."

She anſwered only with a groan, and after a few minutes, gathering more ſtrength, ſhe continued------

But

But, my dear Count, the clock ſtrikes two; it was the ſame hour laſt night, when I heard this important confeſſion. It is the hour that I have been ſummoned again to attend; and if you knew the extreme intereſt I have in this affair, you would not wonder that I cannot delay it.

Here Lorenzo abruptly aroſe, having brought his long narrative down to his arrival in Madrid, and to which the Count liſtened with attention and indignation. Then taking the hand of his early friend, he aſſured him of his ſervices, and offered himſelf to attend him.

Lorenzo declined this offer as unneceſſary.

"I ſuſpect," ſaid he, "from the words of your ſervant, that it was father Timotheus who ſent me the note, and I certainly have nothing to fear from Don Raphael, in the houſe of his wife."

"I hope it may be ſo," anſwered the Count, "I have conſiderable deſire to ſee this ſtrange character, whoſe vindictive

which, peculiarly ſuited the wildneſs of my fancy. All my leiſure time was employed in theſe ſtudies, which ſo faſcinated my ſenſes, that I had not prudence to forego them, though all my experiments failed, and my ſpells diſſolved of themſelves. After the death of my father, when I became my own maſter, I followed this ſtudy with increaſed avidity, though my attention was at times interrupted, by my increaſing affection for Lady Agnes.

"About a twelvemonth ago, a ſtranger came to my palace; his features and his dreſs were foreign, and he introduced himſelf to me, by ſaying, that his knowledge of diſtant events, had informed him, that I was a ſearcher after truth, and poſſeſſed a mind capable of penetrating the ſecrets of nature. His learning and his eloquence, ſufficiently ingratiated him into my good opinion, and his tales confirmed my belief.

"The grand object of my inquiry was the poſſibility of raiſing a ſpirit; for though

though I had no deſire after either riches, honor, or power, I had an inſatiable wiſh to behold an immaterial being, and hold intercourſe with the celeſtial world."

"Leave," ſaid he, "the trifling toys of ſpells and charms, and childiſh conjurations; they are either wicked, or at leaſt fooliſhly preſumptuous. There is a ſublimer ſtudy before you, which will exalt you above the earth you tread upon, and open to you the paths of the heavens. It is not at once that we are to arrive at ſuch perfection, as to expect that thoſe pure ſpirits, which roam at large through all the infinite regions of ſpace, will condeſcend to become viſible to our impure organs. We muſt paſs every day a portion of our time in prayer, and divine contemplation; waiting with unwavering patience, thoſe impulſes we ſhall receive in various ways." Diſcourſes, ſuch as theſe, entirely charmed my ſenſes, and if it was an illuſion, it certainly was pleaſing.

"Mahmut

"Mahmut is the name of this inimitable man. His doctrines captivated me, and I expected with impatience, when I ſhould be conſidered as worthy to hold community with the etherial beings of inviſibility. My enthuſiaſm perhaps cauſed me to believe, that I ſometimes received impulſes in a myſterious way; and more than once I have fancied that I diſtinguiſhed whiſperings in my chamber, though I could not be certain of any diſtinct ſounds. Theſe ſymptoms, my new friend aſſured me, were certain fore-runners of a more open intercourſe, and he would congratulate me on my approaching felicity, when I ſhould behold the preſent and future world at once.

"This man is a Georgian by birth. He has been a ſlave in different climates, and ſeems to poſſeſs all the knowledge which man can attain. He converſes in almoſt all the living languages. He is maſter of all the dead ones, and you will find him a prodigy."

"By

"By what means does he live?" ſaid Lorenzo. "I almoſt expect that he is an impoſtor who contrives, by his wit, to live upon the wealth of others."

"You do him great wrong," replied the Count. "I know not his reſources, but he has never accepted from me the ſmalleſt preſent, refuſing all my overtures of this ſort with a gracious ſmile, aſſuring me that when I ſhould attain to the ſummit of my wiſhes, I ſhould deſpiſe not only wealth but every thing which men call pleaſure."

"He muſt be a prodigy, indeed," ſaid Lorenzo. "Proceed, if you pleaſe; this is a ſyſtem of which I never had any knowledge, and to the perfection of which I cannot conceive that man can attain."

"I ſee," replied the Count, "that you are not far from becoming a convert to theſe principles. I will introduce you to a ſociety we have founded in Madrid. We are obliged to meet with the utmoſt ſecreſy, leſt the holy office ſhould diſcover us.

us. There are only myself, Mahomet, and four others. On our next meeting a novice will be introduced, whom I have not yet seen. It is neceſſary, however, that you take a ſolemn oath before I introduce you, not that I have any doubt in your honour, but it is an indiſpenſable preface. After what I have now told you, and after what you have yourſelf experienced, you will give me credit for not being impoſed upon by my own fancy.

I was ſitting, ready prepared for my appointment with lady Agnes, watching with impatience the ſlow motion of that table clock, when I heard three diſtinct raps upon the door of that cloſet where I ſleep, and where no one can enter or return without paſſing this apartment; I aroſe to open the door, when I heard the ſame ſignal at the outer door behind me, and a ſlight noiſe evidently paſſed by me, like the ruſſling of ſilk, though I could ſee nothing. A pleaſing kind of ſenſation, mingled with expectation, thrilled over my nerves, and

I ſat

I ſat down, every moment in hopes that ſome celeſtial being would appear before me. I muſt acknowledge that Lady Agnes was forgot; and it was not till the clocks of Madrid ſtruck one, that I ſummoned reſolution to leave my ſtudy; after this firſt token of celeſtial regard, which I conſider as the forerunner of more particular favours."

Lorenzo ſuppreſſed his inclination to laugh at the credulity of his friend, whom he could not but conſider as in ſome way the dupe to Mahmut, and he propoſed in his own mind to give attention to what might enſue, that he might expoſe, if poſſible, the fallacious expectations of the Count.

On the following day Count Aranda dreſſed himſelf with the greateſt taſte, and haſtened to preſent himſelf at the grate of the convent; but he was very much chagrined, to find that Lady Agnes was denied to his inquiries; and though the porteress would not abſolutely ſay, that

ſhe did not reſide in their convent, ſhe hinted, that her neareſt relations would not be permitted to ſee her.

The Count was much diſappointed at this reception, urging all the arguments he could invent, but with no further advantage than getting a note conveyed, to which the meſſenger returned with a verbal anſwer, that Lady Agnes would be obliged to quit the convent if ſhe could not be free from interruption; and that it was evident that his excuſes for his neglect, were palpable evaſions to colour over the truth.

To this the Count would have replied, could he have prevailed on the meſſenger to deliver his note, but all his perſuaſions were in vain, and he was obliged to return, overwhelmed with diſappointment, to his palace, where he related to Lorenzo the ill ſucceſs of his errand.

"Never deſpair, my friend," ſaid Lorenzo, "it is evident her heart has forgiven you, or ſhe would not have commented on

your

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purport of his visit; but the moment he spoke, his voice caused a visible emotion in the ladies, and Agnes would have withdrawn had not her companion compelled her to remain.

"I perceive," said Lorenzo, in a low voice, "that habit cannot conceal me from the penetrating observations of you ladies; but my errand is of such a nature, that I am certain you will lend me your attention."

"You are, undoubtedly, an impostor," replied Lady Agnes, turning away. "If you are importunate, I will expose you as you merit."

"Hold, my dear friend," said the other lady, in a whisper; "you know not the important reason I have, to request your attention."

"You will be astonished," said Lorenzo, "if you will but listen to the most singular accident you ever heard in your lives; the parlour is vacant, and if you will take seats,

ſeats, I am certain you will not conſider the time as thrown away."

Theſe words arouſed the curioſity of the ladies, and together with ſome arguments uſed by the other lady in a whiſper, prevailed upon Lady Agnes to ſit down.

"You will be ſurprized," ſaid he, "that a friend of the Count Aranda, who had never ſeen him from his youth, and who had not been in Madrid many days, ſhould, by the guidance of fortune, be the perſon who ſhould convey away his miſtreſs without previous intention, himſelf being confined by ſupernatural means; for certainly Lady Agnes muſt know too well the power of her own charms, to ſuppoſe that any human means could have detained ſo ardent a lover as the Count."

"Whoever you are," replied ſhe, "you do not want boldneſs, in thus venturing yourſelf within theſe walls, in a character you evidently aſſume. What you have related, concerning the Count, excites my fear for his reaſon. I confeſs he has ſome-

nimes discoursed to me on these sort of things; but that his mind should be so weak as thus to be imposed upon, is truly ridiculous; and if I could be prevailed upon to forgive him, I should fear that some visionary fair one would rival me in his affections. Tell him then, that till he has seen this daughter of the air, that he is so anxiously looking after, and determines between us, I most positively forbid him to trouble himself concerning me.

"I thank you," replied Lorenzo, "I will carry to my friend these tidings of your forgiveness, for I am very well satisfied that his preference will not be given to a shade."

"You may do as you please," replied the lady, "but while my father remains in danger, I will never quit these walks."

The ladies then arose. The person who had remained silent then waved her hand, in token of adieu to Lorenzo, and hastened to depart, that she might conceal

ceal thoſe tears ſhe appeared unable any longer to ſuppreſs.

A nun entering the parlour, Lorenzo was obliged to haſten away without daring to inquire the meaning of this emotion; and when he reflected upon all the actions of this lady, he concluded it muſt be Chriſtina herſelf, who had followed him to Madrid.

The Count was in raptures at the ſucceſs of his friend, and determined to ſend his ſervant with a letter, containing a thouſand tender expreſſions, and an aſſurance that the Duke, her father was faſt recovering.

The next object of conſideration was to free Lorenzo from the fears which confined him to diſguiſes, and at leaſt clear his public character from imputation. A ſervant was diſpatched to inquire for Count Pandolfo, but he returned with word, that the Count had been miſſing two days from his lodgings; where it was whiſpered, that he was obliged to fly from

his creditors, his fortune being entirely diſſipated in play.

"It will be a matter of no conſequence," ſaid the Count; "I will apply perſonally to ſuperior authority. Meanwhile you will only have to remain within my houſe, where I flatter myſelf, even Don Raphael will not be able to diſcover you. If it be as you ſuſpect, that Chriſtiana is in Madrid, I muſt inſiſt on your overcoming thoſe ſcruples which are ſo calculated to promote our happineſs.

"You are planning the projects of a gay heart," replied Lorenzo; "one of the moſt entertaining faculties of the mind, is projection; as faſt as one air-built temple falls to the ground, we raiſe another from the ruins, with additional decorations. But here is ſome perſon coming to viſit you."

"It is ſix o'clock," anſwered the Count, and by the ſtep, it is my old friend Malmut."

Lorenzo

Lorenzo looked towards the door with expectation; and was not a little ſurprized to ſee a perſon enter, not more than four feet high; but the expreſſion and vivacity of his countenance made ſufficient amends for the lowneſs of his ſtature; and the rapid penetration of his eyes, which might have given pain, was ſoftened with ſo much mildneſs, that he ſeemed enlivened with a ſpark of celeſtial genius, and before he ſpoke, Lorenzo found himſelf intereſted.

The Count introduced him, with remarking, that between them there need be no diſguiſe; and they immediately entered into diſcourſe on intereſting ſubjects; in which Mahmut ſeemed acquainted with all the properties of nature, the mechaniſm of things, and the tranſactions and wiſdom of the paſt, and preſent, generations of man. He entered with ſo much candour into the philoſophy of celeſtial influences, and intercourſes, that Lorenzo began to think, that there might be much of truth in what he advanced.

But how, I pray thee, can it be possible to be an immaterial being, and how can it be possible any being can be immaterial?"

"There is no being immaterial," replied Mahmut, "but the Creator of all beings; it is from him all existencies emanate, and are the breath of his power. From the roughest and densest particle of matter, to the pure and celestial angel, who dwells in perpetual rapture, all is matter. The volume of the ocean, so compressed, that it cannot evaporate, is as hard and impenetrable as marble. When it is raised into vapour, when it is rarified into air, and still further, into fire, it is still material. So man, whether he grovels on the earth, whether he mounts into the realms of another existence, or is yet more highly exalted, still is material. We know there are whole genera of insects which the human eye cannot perceive, nevertheless they exist, and we do not call them immaterial. Are we the climax of creation? Are all

beings

beings too minute for ſight, material, and thoſe above our knowledge, and above us, immaterial? No; whatever be the form, and form they certainly have, they are material: though we may not be able to graſp them with our hands any more than we can catch the breezes of the ſpring, or ſtay the flaſhes of the pregnant clouds. No doubt, when we ſhall have ſufficiently purified our ſouls, ſo as to be capable of withdrawing them from an immediate connection with groſſer matter, we ſhall ſee thoſe beings, as clearly as when the ſun ſhines we can behold millions of motes, which are otherwiſe hid from our eyes."

Lorenzo was charmed at this fanciful hypotheſis. "If," ſaid he, "it were poſſible for us in our preſent ſtate of exiſtence to hold any intercourſe with pure ſpirits, think you we can behold our departed friends? Do they wander at large, from planet to planet? Do they hover around us? or is it only a diſtinct claſs of beings,

one

one degree removed from ourſelves, whom we are capable of perceiving. By the way, I have one objection to make againſt the doctrine of a good and evil attendant upon man, as that would ſuppoſe twice the number of ſpirits conſtantly employed, one to preſerve, and one to deſtroy this atom of mortality."

"Your objection is juſt," replied Mahmut, looking at the Count, with a ſmile. "Man is by no means a being of ſo much conſequence as his pride teaches him. Pride is a flattering ſerpent, conſtantly whiſpering praiſe in his ear, what does this little reptile ſay to himſelf? Am not I lord of this creation, the paramount maſter of all the beings that move on the ſurface of this earth? The ſun which moves through the heavens by day, the moon which revolves round the earth by night, are created for my convenience! The infinite hoſt of ſtars, which glitter in the firmament, are to influence my actions, and ſhed their qualities upon plants and

minerals

minerals for my use and my pleasure; and whether I am sleeping, or whether I am waking, spirits minister around;—the great and tremendous spirit of evil, is ever on the watch to lead me into error.' But listen, O man, to thine own insignificance, for thou art as the sand upon a mole-hill, or the insect of an evening ray. What art thou to the earth that thou inhabitest? What is that earth compared to the sun, the centre of its revolutions, and the source of light to a system which thine imagination can scarcely traverse? This system itself, is but a point, compared to the myriads of burning suns which blaze in the regions of space, and around which planets revolve, in number and magnitude unknown: and if thou canst elevate thy reason, even to farther depths of space, this whole constellation of systems, suns, and worlds, may circumvolve round an infinite centre, where dwelleth the author of all things, in incomprehensible glory!—Then say, O man, what art thou?"

The

The Count was an enthuſiaſt in theſe doctrines, and Lorenzo took ſufficient intereſt, to deſire that he might be preſent at the next meeting of their ſociety, which was to take place the following evening. From metaphyſics they deſcended to politics, and Lorenzo perceived that Mahmut was a man of liberal opinions, though extremely cautious in his words, making uſe of thoſe expreſſions which would allow of different conſtructions, and deſcanting upon nature and univerſal benevolence.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

LORENZO was ſurprized that he had not received a ſecond meſſage from the monk, concerning the death of Lady Almedia, and he conſulted with his friend what ſteps he ſhould purſue; without coming to any concluſion; as he apprehended that Don Raphael could not have remained ſo long in Madrid, without having information of this event, in which caſe there could be no doubt but he would come forward and take an active part.

On the following evening, Mahmut called to accompany Lorenzo and his friend, to the temple of Celeſtial Influences. "You muſt not be ſurprized," ſaid the Count,

Count, as they paſſed along the ſtreets, "that a perſon of my rank ſhould deſcend to enter places like theſe. You know the vigilance of the police, and the hazard we run from the Inquiſition." They were by this time amongſt ſome of the moſt wretched alleys, in Madrid, inhabited by the loweſt claſſes of ſociety. They proceeded through a winding and narrow paſſage, totally dark, with the houſes ſo cloſe together, that a man might reach from one to the other.

At the further end of this place, Mahmut ranped at the door; a voice from within demanded who was there? Mahmut replied, by giving the watch word of the ſociety, and the door was opened, without any one appearing.

The Count and his friends proceeded in ſilence and darkneſs, through ſeveral rooms, till they entered one which was without other furniture than a large cheſt, and an iron lamp depending from the ceiling. The Count took from the cheſt a plain white

white linen garment of ſingular form; and giving it to Lorenzo, he informed him, that all ſtrangers who were not initiated into their ſociety were obliged, by their rules, to cover themſelves with this habit, which had much the reſemblance of that formerly worn by the prieſts of Delphi.

Lorenzo complied with this rule, laying on one ſide the monkiſh gown which covered his military dreſs.

"You will excuſe us," ſaid the Count, "we have to dreſs in another apartment. Remember, that whatever you ſee and hear, you muſt not break ſilence, or call any one by name."

Lorenzo ſmiled, but when he had finiſhed robing himſelf, he ſtood in ſuſpenſe, whether his friends were to return, and conduct him into this temple, or whether he was to look for the entrance himſelf; though the dim light which the lamp above ſhed through the room, did not allow him to ſee far around.

He

He ſat down upon the cheſt to wait for the Count, when a voice, from a perſon unſeen, demanded who he was—Lorenzo was perplexed—he could not reply, a friend of Count Aranda's, without breaking his inſtructions, and he replied, "I am a ſtranger."

"What then is your buſineſs here?" ſaid the ſame voice.

"I came to be inſtructed in the doctrine of celeſtial influences," replied Lorenzo.

"Have you an ardent deſire to learn?" demanded the ſame voice.

"I have," replied Lorenzo without reflection.

"And you have ſworn to be eternally ſilent on the ſubjects you may diſcover?"

"I have," anſwered Lorenzo, whoſe curioſity was conſiderably inflamed by theſe preparations.

"Proceed then," ſaid the ſame voice, "and learn that the firſt ſtep to happineſs is diſcretion."

Lorenzo

Lorenzo looked round him for ſome one to conduct him, but no perſon was to be ſeen, only a ſmall lamp, like a ſtar, appeared at the farther end of the room, with theſe words in tranſparent characters, *"We have ſeen his ſtar in the eaſt, and are come."*

Lorenzo reflected that this muſt be an intimation to advance; and as though every thing had been performed by magic, a door beneath the inſcription was gently opened, and he entered into a temple moſt admirably adapted to ſtrike the ſenſes.

The room which was thus fitted up, was a long ſquare, at each end of which was a cluſter of cryſtal lamps: the walls of the temple were hung with tapeſtry of a light blue colour, which was gathered along the roof in the manner of clouds, and ſprinkled with ſpangles of ſilver: in the centre of the floor was a ſmall elevation, on which ſtood an altar of the Jewiſh model, and from which aroſe clouds of frankincenſe, at once gratifying the ſenſes, and obſcur-

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ing the ſight. Lorenzo took his ſeat as near the railing of the altar as he could, impreſſed with the air of profound myſtery, which every thing around inſpired.

An organ, that was unſeen, began to play a mournful ſtrain in a minor key. The hangings at the further end were drawn up, and four perſons entered, habited in purple ſilk, fringed with gold; and inſtead of the Spaniſh hat and feather, they wore tiaras of purple, ſprinkled with golden ſtars; Lorenzo eaſily recollected his friend and Mahmut, who took their ſtations in ſilence. In a few minutes entered a perſon, clothed ſuperbly in a flowing garment of green ſilk, worked with emblematical devices in gold and ſilver: on his head he wore a tiara of the ſame colour, ſtudded with jewels, which ſhed their effulgence when he moved. This perſon was to officiate as prieſt, and was followed by two boys curiouſly clothed. He took his ſtation at the altar, and the

ſudden

ſudden ſtroke of a drum ſeemed the ſignal to commence the ceremonial.

Lorenzo was ſtruck with awe in ſpite of himſelf, and remained anxiouſly regarding every thing that paſſed. The drum was ſtruck at intervals of half a minute, and the effect was truly ſolemn, leading the mind to the deepeſt and moſt ſerious reflections. In the midſt of this mournful ſymphony, entered a man clothed in ſcarlet, with a drawn ſword in his hand, after him followed a perſon in black robes, and a black crape over his face, and the proceſſion was cloſed by two men dreſſed in purple like the Count.

"Who have you there?" demanded the prieſt, in a ſtern voice.

"*A man,*" replied the perſon in ſcarlet.

"Then why is he caſt down? and wherefore does he hide his countenance?"

"Becauſe he is polluted with mortality; his ſoul is beneath a ſhade, as his body is beneath a covering; and the fear of the ſword hangs over him."

"Has

"Has he then attained to the years of man?" said the priest; "and has he not learned that most of his sentiments proceed from *prejudice?* This world is the emblem of future punishments.—All take care of it is falling upon his head."

The person who was thus played upon was unable to see, for a bandage that covered his eyes; and starting to avoid the fancied blow, the priest laughed aloud: but Lorenzo became more serious. What is meant by this, thought he, but a ridicule of future punishments. These men have some intention I do not at present perceive, and my friend is the dupe of their imposture.

The ceremony proceeded; it was a mixture of Christianity, Judaism, and Paganism; after which the priest pronounced these words:—

"If," said he, "we seek to be considered worthy the ineffable privilege of celestial communication, what regard ought we to pay to our moral and social duties! But though

though we ſhould not aſpire ſo high as to community with the inhabitants of the inviſible world, the grand arcana of our doctrine teaches us the true way to happineſs, and wholly changes the formation of our nature. The grand ſecret of our ſociety is the knowledge of the pure and genuine principles of Chriſtianity, which have been handed down to us from the apoſtles, and preſerved by the appointed *few*. The *whole* is beſotted with dreams, with chimeras, and with fables. When we ſhall be able to ſpread the glad tidings to all nations, and the grand principles we profeſs, war ſhall be baniſhed from the earth, and even law itſelf ſhall become unknown; for there will be neither crime nor the neceſſity of puniſhment. The golden age of the poets will no longer be a fiction, and though the lion and the lamb might not herd together, mutual benevolence would link the whole circle of mankind, and the angels from the heavens would deſcend to dwell among us."

After

After this ſpeech, followed ſeveral ceremonies that might be termed a mockery of the chriſtian myſteries, and which propriety ought to bury in eternal ſilence: the black robes were ſtripped off the initiated, and he was habited in green; but even Lorenzo's indignation at the ceremonial was ſuſpended by ſurprize, when he beheld in the novice, the Marquis de Mirandula.

Lorenzo reflected how he ſhould make himſelf known to the Marquis, being obliged to ſilence, when a ſudden flame broke from beneath the altar, and quickly catching the drapery, the temple was involved in ſmoke and flame. The danger was imminent, every one endeavouring to ſave themſelves, without any regard to brotherly kindneſs. Lorenzo and the Marquis, had the preſence of mind to leave their celeſtial robes to the mercy of the terreſtrial flames; but the Count, unuſed to act with deciſion on emergency, had much difficulty to ſave himſelf, with

the

the assistance of Lorenzo, who called upon the Marquis by his name, and together made good their retreat into the narrow court.

"How is it possible you have found your way to Madrid," whispered Lorenzo. "Are you aware of your danger?"

"Enough," replied the Marquis, pressing his hand. "Another time.—Where do you live? Where can I wait upon you?"

"Call upon me, or even now go with us to the palace of Count Aranda, my friend here. I have a thousand things to tell you."

The Marquis replied, with a smile, "Perhaps not so many as you imagine. My daughter Christiana has informed me of every thing, to the time of your leaving Leon: her obligations are very great to you."

There was a turn of meaning in these words, which called the colour into Lorenzo's

zo's face. "Is your daughter in Madrid?" inquired he---"in the convent of Mercy?"

"Yes;" anſwered the Marquis, "ſhe has taken ſhelter there for the preſent."

"Then I was right," ſaid Lorenzo to himſelf. "It was the charming Chriſtiana that I beheld, when I viſited Lady Agnes. I have certainly acted a fooliſh part to refuſe ſo much beauty and merit."

They had by this time paſſed through ſeveral lanes, when they were ſtopped by the appearance of a proceſſion, compoſed of a long file of torch bearers, and a train of mutes, who attended a hearſe, decorated in the moſt pompous manner. The glare of the torches againſt the houſes, and the ſlow motion of the proceſſion was ſolemnly impreſſive; mingling with the crowd, they determined to be witneſſes of a funeral, celebrated under ſuch unuſual circumſtances, and they proceeded towards the church of St. James.

"Who is the perſon that is going to be interred?" ſaid the Marquis to a byſtander.

"It

"It is a lady," replied the perſon. "It is at her own requeſt ſhe is to be buried by torch light. Nobody knows what family ſhe belongs to, not even her own ſervants. They would have had rare doings indeed, when ſhe died, had not an old monk popped in upon them. They ſay ſhe has left a vaſt fortune in ready coin, good piſtoles and dollars I warrant, to ſome perſon whom nobody knows. Aye; there, that is the monk following the hearſe; I will engage he was deep in the lady's ſecrets."

Lorenzo was ſo much agitated, during this information, that he had not power to reply, and turning away, he whiſpered to the Count—"Ah, my dear friend, which way am I now to proceed; this is the funeral of the Lady Almedia; now would I give all I poſſeſs to know the truth of that confeſſion, which I heard.—Let us, however, proceed; but can you not contrive to rid yourſelf of this oſtentatious habit?—every perſon gazes at you."

"Let them latisfy themlelves," replied the Count; "I do not value their thoughts."

While they thus converled, and were following amongst the crowd, a noiſe and confuſion behind, cauſed them to ſtand up againſt the houſes. They perceived the glittering of halberts and fuills, at a diſtance, and the Marquis de Mirandula trembled with fear that he might be the object of their fearch; ſo apt are the guilty to ſtartle at the appearance of danger.

"Make way," cried a number of voices, "make way for the officers of the holy Herminandad.—They have taken a ſpy, an infidel, a traitor!" He will be hanged, drawn, quartered, and broken alive. Make way.

This uproar increaſing, Lorenzo and his friends began to be under no little apprehenſion, but they hoped from the greatneſs of the throng, to eſcape obſervation. How were they aſtonished when they beheld the virtuous and thrice excellent

cellent Mahmut, in the hands of the officers of juſtice.

"Heavens!" cried the Count, turning pale, "let us attempt to reſcue this innocent man."

"Innocent or guilty," replied the Marquis, "it would be ſomething worſe than raſhneſs to attempt ſuch an enterprize. By St. Peter, I wiſh we were ſafe out of this adventure; ſhould we be recognized, we ſhall be ſeized as accomplices, and whatever might be your fate, I know few queſtions would be aſked about me."

"Whether this accuſation be true, or falſe," ſaid Lorenzo, "the fire which has by this time levelled the temple of Celeſtial Influences, has done us the moſt eſſential ſervice, as it will leave behind no traits of the ſociety."

The majority of the crowd were more intereſted in the fate of the ſpy, than the ſolemnities of the funeral; probably becauſe it was the neweſt object, and having paſſed away like a torrent, the proceſſion

was not long before it reached the church. The doors were open, and the people eagerly flocked in. Lorenzo and his friends turned aside into the dark aisles that the Count might disengage himself from his celestial garments, which were now become so dangerous.

While they were thus employed, they perceived a man, with solemn step and agitated air, stealing amongst the pillars. Sometimes he stopped, as if listening to the chaunting of the monks, and then again he paced the dark aisles, wrapped in thoughts that seemed abstracted from the passing ceremony and assembly.

The glare of the lights rendered it dangerous for Lorenzo or the Marquis to approach near enough to be remarked, and leaning against one of the pillars, they watched the steps of this solitary person, till they lost him in the obscurity.

"It is not a little wonderful," said the Count, "that you should have witnessed the death of this lady by accident, and

should

ſhould this night have been led to her interment without intention. You have more than once mentioned to me the confeſſion that you heard, but I know not why you have never yet related to me the particulars."

"It is of that nature," anſwered Lorenzo, "that this is by no means a place fitting for the detail. Heaven grant that the deceaſed may receive pardon. She certainly had many crimes to repent, particularly her inconſtancy to Don Raphael."

A deep groan from behind, cauſed them to ſtart, and turn round; but they could not perceive any perſon in the gloom.

"Had I no other reaſons than theſe," added Lorenzo, in a low voice, "I would ſuppreſs my reſentment, but had you heard this confeſſion, you would learn that I cannot proſecute Don Raphael."

"You cannot, indeed, proſecute Don Raphael," ſaid the tall perſon whom they had obſerved, and who now ſuddenly ſtood

before them. "Don Raphael has pursued thee even to the sanctuary, and finds thee this!"

Immediately he darted a blow with a poignard at Lorenzo, which the obscurity alone prevented being fatal. He instantly fled amongst the pillars, but the Marquis pursued him, and catching him by the cloak, the assassin, to extricate himself, turned suddenly round, and buried his poignard in the breast of the unfortunate Mirandula, who fell upon the pavement.

The torch bearers quickly came up, Lorenzo and the Count having seized the arm of the assassin, who now remained without attempting to escape; and drawing his cloak from his face, Lorenzo sunk back with dismay, when he beheld the well-known features of Don Raphael.

"The deed is done," said Don Raphael, with extreme coolness; "I perceive that I have revenged myself beyond my desire. I surrender myself with satisfaction. Marquis de Mirandula, you robbed me of all

that

that I valued—I have been revenged in the destruction of your family and yourself; and, O most singular destiny! you fall, as I may say, upon the grave of my faithless wife, whose funeral you came in triumph to witness. And you, Lorenzo, even now, though I am going to be chained in a dungeon, you shall not escape my vengeance—a murderer dragged along by wretches. Learn, and tremble while you learn, that I am the Duke of Arragon!

The abject crowd now ceased their hold, and shrunk back. Lorenzo and the Count, each different motives, were too much confounded to wonder at this assertion, and if the monk Timotheus had not left the obsequies of the Lady, Don Raphael would have walked away unmolested, for his voice and imperious frown struck terror into all who beheld him.

"Let the gates of the church be closed," cried Father Timotheus. "If no man is found to call upon heaven for justice, I will stand forward:—Detain this man; I

charge you in the name of the church, and of the Inquiſition, ſeize him: he has committed murder, blaſphemy, and ſacrilege; and if he is ſuffered to eſcape, your lives ſhall anſwer."

Again was Don Raphael ſeized, and being delivered over to the civil power, he remained ſullenly ſilent.

Father Timotheus immediately returned to finiſh the funeral, which had been thus interrupted, without ſaying one word, either to the Count or Lorenzo, who were engaged in attending the Marquis, who was already ſpeechleſs, and neither of them knowing his abode, the Count gave directions that he ſhould be conveyed to his own palace, and his ſurgeon ſent for to attend him.

Lorenzo, overwhelmed with the events of the evening, haſtened to his own chamber, if poſſible to arrange the confuſion of his thoughts, and conſider by what means he might avoid becoming a witneſs againſt Don Raphael.

The

The ſurgeon who attended upon the Marquis, ſpoke very doubtfully of the caſe, hinting to the Count, that if the patient had any worldly affair to ſettle, he had better arrange it in the morning, that ſo he might be free from anxiety of mind, and prepare himſelf with reſignation for the event.

The Count perfectly underſtood this language, and took upon himſelf the unpleaſant and melancholy taſk of warning a friend that his days were numbered. In the morning he waited upon the Marquis, whoſe ſpirits were evidently declining.

"You ſee how faſt I am going," ſaid he to the Count, "believe me I have very little to regret in leaving a world, where there is a much greater portion of evil than good, and where I have performed a very fooliſh part. Had I been contented with the retired pleaſures of a country life, where I ought to have been ſecure from the madneſs of politics; I might have paſſed my days in tranquillity: have ſeen

my

my beloved daughter, united to some de-
serving man; and my wife would have
lived to soothe the declining years of my
life. But you see to what rebellion has
reduced me, though in the cause of jus-
tice, (the Count smiled.) What is indi-
vidual power, and particularly when that
power is founded upon a people unstable
as the fluid ocean, and dreadful as the
deep, when the wind roughens the billows.
I am utterly undone, my estates are seques-
tered, my house burnt to the ground, my
family destroyed, and myself a vagabond.
Life under such circumstances cannot
be very dear, and I shall leave the world
with little regret."

"But you will leave your daughter,"
said the Count; "have you any directions
that you wish to give.—Is she established
with any security?"

"There you have touched on my only
regret," said the Marquis, with a sigh. "I
leave behind me my Christiana, and I leave
her unhappy and unprotected. Count
Aranda,

Aranda, I would make a friend of you. I suspect that her heart is engaged to Lorenzo. He is a young man, in whose honor I have the greatest confidence; but he is poor, and I believe ignorant of his birth. Yet how ridiculous in my eyes ought this distinction to be, once so dear to me as a Spaniard and a nobleman. I know not whether he would accept the hand of my daughter, and for me to offer and receive a denial, would be an insufferable humiliity."

"I am perfectly sensible of these difficulties," answered the Count, smiling at the struggle of prejudice and habit, which yet remained in the breast of the dying man. "Do you know that Lorenzo has already been married?"

"No;" replied the Marquis, "you surprize me."

The Count perceived by this, that Christiana had not informed her father of the discovery of her sister Cornelia, and now that she no longer lived, and his life hung upon

upon a moment, he conceived it prudent to be silent on the subject; but this leading the discourse to Don Raphael. The Marquis sighed at the mention of his name. "It was the first misfortune of my life," said he, "to have this madman for my rival. No man but myself, dared openly profess his esteem for the lady, from a dread of the power and revengeful temper of this man, who though one of the greatest noblemen of Spain; while yet a youth, forsook his father's house on a trifling pique, and entered himself as a common soldier. All his actions, from his earliest infancy, have been tinctured with madness. He was insane for two years after the marriage of Donna Sempronia; and when he discovered his wife's infidelity, he kept his chamber for several months, suffering his beard and his nails to grow, and sleeping upon the floor. None were allowed to see him but his brother, the present Duke, and his servant; and his constant declaration was, that all mankind were savage beasts,

and

and monſters of ingratitude. It was ſome time after reported, that he was dead, and thoſe more intimate with the family, believed that he was privately maintained, being without power to govern himſelf; but I have learned from Chriſtiana, his ſingular retreat, and the manner of her falling into his power."

Lorenzo, extremely pale with want of reſt, and agitation of mind, now entered the chamber. He ſat down beſide the bed. "Marquis," ſaid he, "I lament to ſee you in this ſituation; there appears an unavoidable fatality attending all who are related, or any way connected with Don Raphael. You cannot be ignorant of the ſtrange ſpecies of confinement, in which he held your daughter, but perhaps you do not know that his inſatiable hatred againſt myſelf, is on account of my marriage with her."

"Your marriage," ſaid the Marquis, faintly. "Good heavens, can this be true? Are you married to my daughter, and ſhe conceal it from me? But I gueſs the pro-

miſe

miſe I exacted from you that night of our flight, had made her fear my anger—but I forgive you. Give me your hand, my ſon.——"

"Ah," replied Lorenzo, mournfully, "I perceive that you have miſtaken me; it was not to Lady Chriſtiana, but to that daughter whom you loſt in childhood, and who is now loſt for ever, that I pledged my vows."

"Am I dreaming?" ſaid the Marquis, raiſing his eyes from which the tears ſtole ſilently down. "Am I permitted, before I die, to learn the fate of that darling child? Proceed Lorenzo."

Lorenzo then related the outlines of the education and unfortunate fate of Cornelia, but was himſelf ſo much affected, that the Marquis catching the contagion, appeared on the point of expiring.

"The love and hatred," ſaid he, when ſomewhat recovered, "of a revengeful and ſanguine man are alike to be dreaded; there is no aſylum from his power but the grave,

grave, to which I am quickly approaching. It grieves me that I leave Chriſtiana behind me poor and forlorn. I wiſh once more to ſee her, but if I do it muſt be to day."

The ſurgeon now entered the room to examine the wound, and the ſtate of the patient, and when he retired, the Count and Lorenzo attended him.

"The opinion I held laſt night," ſaid he, "I muſt to day confirm. This gentleman will not ſee over twelve hours. The internal parts are mortally touched; the cavalier knew better how to take his aim than the bravo that wounded my Lord Duke, though at firſt he was in a terrible fright, and ſent for his confeſſor."

"Do you attend upon the Duke of Arragon then?" inquired the Count.

"I have that honour," replied the ſurgeon, and I will anſwer for him he will be a ſound man in a very few days. I muſt ſay I never ſaw a neater thruſt in my life."

Lorenzo and his friend rejoiced to hear that the Duke was no longer in danger,

which

which permitted a greater freedom of correſpondence with the convent where his daughter boarded; and the ſame perſon who took the meſſage requeſting the attendance of Donna Chriſtiana, conveyed a letter to Lady Agnes, which ſhe received without anſwering, and the meſſenger brought word that ſhe was extremely ill, to the great grief of the Count, who yet drew for himſelf ſome degree of ſatisfaction; as he judged by her agitation that he was not ſo indifferent to her as ſhe pretended.

So quick a ſucceſſion of misfortunes had overtaken Chriſtiana, whoſe delicate conſtitution, and ſoftneſs of diſpoſition, was ſo ill calculated to buffet with the miſeries of life, that ſhe ſeemed very faſt approaching the termination of all her ſorrows.

Lorenzo could not behold, with indifference, the fixed dejection that was written upon her features; and though he ſaw, without a tear, the near diſſolution of

her

her father, it was visible that she more deeply suffered.

In the course of the day the Count had been himself to inquire after father Timotheus, and the Count Pandolfo, but without success; and he was not a little suspicious that the monk, having possession of the lady's will, would consider the interest of his convent. He learnt, with surprize, that Don Raphael had escaped from the prison, and that the jailor was confined on suspicion. "I shall myself be afraid," said he, when he related this information to Lorenzo. "This man is a dangerous being in society, and beneath the mask of madness may commit any outrage unpunished."

"This is the reason," replied Lorenzo, "of the monk's absence. I will pledge myself upon the honesty of father Timotheus." "It is not the open-hearted, the free and mirth-loving part of mankind, we have to fear; it is the outward shew of particular

particular ſanctity, and the pretenſion to more than uſual virtue."

During the day Chriſtiana remained beſide her father. In the evening the Marquis requeſted that Count Aranda and Lorenzo would favour him with their preſence."

"I have ſent for you," ſaid he, in a faint voice, "that I may leave you the executors of a verbal will, which is ſimply, that you will not permit my orphan daughter to become deſtitute. No doubt the government, after my death, will confer upon her ſome eſtabliſhment: and I leave to you both the ungrateful office of ſoliciting in her favour. Such is the utter ruin that has overwhelmed our houſe, that our ancient grandeur is now departed for ever."

"This duty which you have left us," replied the Count, "will be a painful pleaſure: but will not Lorenzo be jealous of my interference? He to whom you firſt committed your daughter in truſt, and who

who has so long been her guardian. Methinks he has a natural claim to that office, and ought to insure to himself the right, by a ceremony that alone is wanting to his happiness."

Lorenzo, in some confusion, endeavoured to check the Count by his looks. Christiana raised her eyes to Lorenzo, and blushed, but the tinge was so faint that it subsided in a moment, and she suppressed her emotions with a sigh.

An impressive silence sealed up the lips of the company, nor did any one appear willing to interrupt it. Near half an hour thus passed away, when Lorenzo, as if acted upon by a sudden impulse, started up, and taking the hand of Christiana, pressed it to his lips.

"Amiable and inestimable friend," said he, "you are already related to me—may I hope that you retain those sentiments which once fell from your tongue. My whole life is of too little consequence to do you service—but here I am, poor, nameless,

nameleſs and unknown, will you then receive me as your lawful protector, and ſhare with me thoſe misfortunes fate has yet in ſtore?"

Chriſtiana had not power to utter her conſent, but ſinking into the arms of Lorenzo, her feelings found ſome relief in ſighs and tears.

"'Tis enough," ſaid the Marquis, endeavouring to raiſe himſelf to expreſs his ſatisfaction: but overcome, he ſunk back upon the bed, and immediately expired.

The Count, being the leaſt engaged, immediately perceived the event which had taken place, and the ſhock of which he feared would in theſe moments be inſufferable to his daughter.

"Your father has ſunk into ſleep, my deareſt lady," ſaid he; "your ſpirits are exceſſively diſcompoſed, and now that you two, who are alone worthy of each other, have come to a right underſtanding, I entreat you to leave this room, if only for

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a few minutes, that you may be more tranquil. I will watch in your absence."

The Count made a sign to Lorenzo, which he perfectly understood, and commanding his feelings, he entreated Christiana to accompany him. By this means he had an opportunity of preparing her for the fatal catastrophe she was so soon to hear; and which he endeavoured to soften by a thousand endearing expressions; for though he experienced not those ardent transports, with which his passion for Cornelia had inspired him; he regarded Christiana with that unchangeable esteem which is more permanent than love, and perhaps a more solid basis for future happiness.

With some difficulty he prevailed upon her to retire to her own chamber, hastening to meet the Count. "I thank you, my friend," said he, "for obliging me to take that leap, which was so necessary for my happiness; and which yet I feared to perform. I know that if pleasure is to be found in the society of a virtuous woman,

it

it muſt be with Chriſtiana.—But is the Marquis certainly dead?"

"Moſt undoubtedly," replied the Count, ſolemnly; "but his daughter muſt not know it till the morning. I have no doubt but you will be happy with this amiable and beautiful lady, who has ſo much intereſted me by her appearance, that I ſhould have been tempted to offer her my hand, if you had longer played the fool."

"Ah!" replied Lorenzo, "if you are ſo pleaſed with her, what would you have been had you beheld Cornelia, as I firſt ſaw her, with all the health and beauty of a ſylvan nymph, and the innocence of an angel."

"Perhaps," anſwered the Count, "ſhe might not have ſo much intereſted me. It is the expreſſion of the countenance I admire: it is not a certain regular proportion of features: there muſt be a ſoul of intelligence to enlighten them. This is not, however, an hour for us to diſcuſs the merit of beauty; matters of importance hang upon

upon our heads. I have ordered a trifling supper in my library;---you must accompany me; it is now eleven, and at twelve I have made a solemn engagement."

Lorenzo smiled, and attended the Count to his library. "I suppose," said he, "I am to understand that Mahmut has recovered his liberty, and is to be with you at midnight."

"No;" replied the Count, "my engagements are not with Mahmut, who has scarce been in my thoughts, since so many more interesting incidents have arisen. I have made a solemn and serious appointment, which I now would willingly forego, as the time draws near.---But let us finish our repast, and when the servant has retired, I will explain myself, and if you have courage, I only request you to remain with me till twelve o'clock, when I promise you upon the event, to form my opinion in future."

Lorenzo very readily acceded to this request, which he hoped would explain to the Count the fallacy of his expectations,

and induce him to abandon a chimerical pursuit, that rendered him unfit for the common duties of life.

They quickly finished their supper, and the servant placing upon the table three wax lights, retired. "Now," says Lorenzo, "let me know the nature of your appointment, and whom you expect?"

"It is many years," answered Count Aranda, solemnly, "that I have been addicted to the study of occult subjects, and I have desired nothing so ardently as to be assured of the nature and existence of the immaterial world. Hitherto all my expectations have proved delusive; and the event of this night will determine all my doubts. This morning when I was conversing with the unfortunate Marquis, our discourse turned upon the immortality of the human soul, its nature, and the possibility of its independent existence, expressing a strong wish that it were possible to be satisfied by the re-appearance of a departed friend. The Marquis, who

looked

looked upon death with a singular calmness, nearly amounting to contempt, smiled at my earnestness. 'I wish,' said he, 'it were possible to gratify you. What would you say if I were to pay you a visit? Would you not be too much shocked?' 'In a solemn thing,' answered I, 'to trifle with these subjects, once have an impious curiosity of prying into mysteries, ordained to be concealed, but certainly if without crime, I might with and you could grant, every doubt must vanish at once.' 'Well, then,' replied he, 'I give you the promise of a dying man; that if it be permitted that the real and self-same spirit of a man should visibly appear, retaining the powers of will and of action, when the clock strikes twelve the first time after my departure, be it at midnight or at noon, expect my appearance, or at least some token of my existence, that shall satisfy you.' 'I accept the engagement with my whole soul,' answered I; 'and remember you have promised.' Such, Lorenzo, is my b. 1001 G 2 appoint-

appointment, and in a very short time it will be determined. Do you find any inclination now to remain?"

"I find both inclination and impatience," said Lorenzo, looking at the clock; "it wants now ten minutes to twelve."

The Count made no reply, but fixing his eyes upon the hands of a small clock, which stood upon a bracket, he remained in the most anxious suspense, and the falling of a flake of wax from the taper, caused his countenance to change.

Lorenzo leaned his arms upon the table, and his head upon his hands, thinking less of the expected appearance, than of the escape of Don Raphael, when the striking of the clock caused him to lift up his eyes; but he became speechless with consternation, when he perceived a door, which was behind the Count, and led into his bed-chamber, open slowly, without visible cause. A low symphony, like the notes of a flute, sounded from some little distance. The Count saw the door open, by its re-

flection

flection in a glaſs facing, and turning pale, he moved his chair half round; but he had no power to riſe, remaining, like Lorenzo, an immovable ſpectator of the event.

The door again cloſed, and after a pauſe of a moment, was again opened. A figure, wrapped in black drapery, glided ſlowly into the apartment, followed by another in white, but their robes were of a faſhion more like grave clothes than any thing human. The flute continued to play a mournful ſymphony, more like the breathing of the wind than a regular air. The firſt ſpectre, dreſſed in black, pauſed when it came into the centre of the apartment, and waving its hand with a myſterious motion, removed a veil, on which the upper robes wholly fell back over the ſhoulders, and the Count beheld the exact reſemblance of Donna Agnes, pale, and dreſſed in a ſhroud. Her lips were without colour, her eyes moved not, nor did ſhe utter any ſound. The Count changed countenance every moment, and had ſcarce power to

breathe, much less to interrupt this tremendous silence, which was only broken by the sighing notes of the distant music.

O God! said the Count, in a mournful tone, as the vision again lifted the veil and moved away, "Agnes is dead!"

The second form followed the steps of the first, but as it passed Lorenzo, it withdrew, for a moment, the long veil which descended nearly to its feet, and exposed to him the pale features of Cornelia. She turned upon him, then again covering her face, passed on after the shade in black, into the same chamber: the music ceased, and the door closed slowly, without visible hands.

Lorenzo was nearly fainting away; the Count was little better, nor could they for some time utter a word. In this consternation they remained, till the clock struck one, which solemn sound seemed to recal them to reason.

Now, said the Count, turning to Lorenzo, are you satisfied, that what I have endeavoured to impress upon you, is no vision-

visionary phantom of a heated mind? The Marquis has not himself been permitted to appear, but he has sent these fair visions in his place. Alas! I have no doubt but Lady Agnes is dead, but late as it is, I will send to the convent."

"It is, I fear, but too true," replied Lorenzo, mournfully; "did you observe the pale countenance of the last bright form; that was the prototype of Cornelia, but how were the roses vanished from her cheeks, by the mildewing fingers of corruption!"

Both again became silent. A kind of bustling confusion in the inner chamber, filled them with new apprehensions; and turning their eyes in fear towards the door, two ladies hastily entered, and threw themselves severally into the arms of the gentlemen, who were too much confounded to speak, and could scarce believe that some delusion did not play upon their senses.

"Have you forgot me?" said the lady to Lorenzo, in a soft complaining voice.

"Are you no longer the fame Lorenzo, that I eſpouſed, or am I different from her whom you led away from the foreſt of St. Helma? Has time cooled your heart towards me? Or have my features vaniſhed from your memory?"

"Neither! Neither!" cried Lorenzo, extremely agitated. "How—What—Can I believe my ſenſes. My mind is diſordered, and illuſions move before me.—Are you indeed, Cornelia? By what miracle are you returned? Did not I behold you dead upon the ground?"

Lady Agnes, who had played this extraordinary trick upon her lover, to ridicule his credulity, now gave way to a fit of laughter, which occaſioned the Count to look ſerious, for he did not feel altogether ſatisfied at the adventure.

"Forgive us," ſaid Donna Agnes, "for this innocent ſtratagem, which is my contrivance, in revenge for the ſlight I received on another occaſion; when the Count's etherial miſtreſs ſuperſeded me. Our

ſcheme

ſcheme could not be carried into effect, without the concurrence of one of your pages, who played upon the flute. It is not an hour ſince we came to your houſe, and we had but juſt taken our ſtations, when you entered this ſtudy. Donna Cornelia knew Lorenzo, when he ventured himſelf ſo much to become your advocate, and we conſidered our plan would thus anſwer a double purpoſe, by introducing her to Lorenzo." Then aſſuming a ſerious air, "I hope that this little incident will ſhake your belief in thoſe abſurdities which haunt you, by convincing you that theſe chimeras dwell only in a warm fancy: and where we meet with well authenticated tales, believe that they have ariſen from ſome fortuitous circumſtances, which paſſed by undetected; for anſwer me—Would not you have been ready to confirm upon oath, the ſtrange apparition of ourſelves, if we had remained concealed, and who would have dared to doubt your veracity?"

"It is moſt true," replied the Count, "I am aſhamed of acknowledging that I have been guilty of ſo much folly. From hence-forward I promiſe that no fair ſpirit, but that of my deareſt Agnes, ſhall interrupt my plans. But, however I rejoice in your preſence, I am unable to credit how Donna Cornelia can be alive, after what Lorenzo has related."

"Let Donna Cornelia anſwer for herſelf," replied Lady Agnes; "her huſband has certainly a right to demand an account of her time."

Cornelia ſmiled, and replied: "I was ſeverely wounded, and fell deprived of my ſenſes, by the horrid ſpectacle which the arrival of Don Raphael and his two accomplices had created; and when I opened my eyes, I beheld you ſtretched upon the ground, father Timotheus bound to a tree, and one of the villians ſtanding guard over us. I uttered a loud cry of deſpair, at ſeeing you dead, as I imagined; and again fainted away. My voice had however reached the

ear

ear of a gentleman, who was travelling the road, and turning his horſe, galloped down the lane; the monk called upon him for aſſiſtance, and the ruffian commanded him at his peril to retreat, for if he moved a ſtep nearer, he would fetch him down from his horſe by a bullet."

The only reply the ſtranger made was by firing at the robber --the ball pierced through his heart, and he fell without a groan.

The ſtranger who had performed this ſervice, then diſmounted, and unbound the monk, who informed him of our adventure, without mentioning our names; and finding that I was not dead, he placed me acroſs his horſe, and bidding the monk provide for himſelf, he galloped away. The motion of the horſe brought me to myſelf, but I loſt ſo much blood that the Count—"

"What Count?" cried Lorenzo.

"Count Pandolfo," anſwered Cornelia,

" that

"that, he told me afterwards, was his name."

Lorenzo concealed his ſurprize, deſiring that ſhe would proceed.

"Count Pandolfo," continued ſhe, "was obliged, after riding ſome time through ſome intricate lanes, to alight at a little cottage, the good woman of which examined my wound, and told the Count, whom ſhe ſeemed to know very well, that I ſhould be in no danger if left to her care. 'She is a charming pretty girl,' ſaid the Count, 'and I would not have her die for a trifle.' When I began to recover I inquired after you, and the Count told me you were certainly dead: he was not a little aſtoniſhed when he heard your name, informing me, that you were his companion in arms; and complimenting me, beſought me to allow him to fill your place in my heart. I know not how many tender expreſſions he made uſe of whenever we met, and I began to think that all men were obliged to admire me; as Don Raphael

phael, you, and this grand looking Count, all ſpoke the ſame language, but though he was ſenſible and witty I did not like his manners, and he was beſide almoſt as old as Don Raphael."

Lorenzo felt himſelf extremely chagrined at theſe words. Heavens, thought he, to himſelf, what utility is there in ignorance like this. I am ſatisfied of the innocence of this lady, but any one who did not know her education, would think her a fool or worſe. "How long did you remain at this cottage with the Count?" ſaid he,

"Not many days," replied Cornelia. "I was ſcarcely recovered, when he was obliged to leave me on particular buſineſs. When he left me he requeſted that I would wait his return, which indeed I could not refuſe; for how was it poſſible I ſhould do other, knowing nothing of the world? I feared to walk to any diſtance, leſt I ſhould loſe myſelf in a wilderneſs that had no end; for my eyes had been uſed to the boun-

boundaries of the mountains, and I was almoſt afraid to look upon ſo wide a region. Count Pandolfo had not been gone more than two days, when there came up to the cottage a moſt gallant and handſome young man. I was ſitting at the door with the old woman, who entertained me with various ſtories, and was perfectly aſtoniſhed at the ſplendor of this gentleman, whom I took for a prince at leaſt, for I had ſeen nobody in Leon like him: he was dreſſed in a green doublet, ſlaſhed quite through, and lined with white ſatin, and covered over with gold points: his cloak was the fineſt ſcarlet cloth, his hat was adorned with a gold buckle and feather, and ſet on one ſide of his head with ſuch a comely air, that I was delighted at beholding him. He had, beſides, a chain of gold round his neck, and his hoſe were of the fineſt crimſon ſilk. He was followed by two ſervants on Arabian courſers, and riding ſtrait up to the cottage, gazed at me ſome moments without ſpeaking, which created in me ſo much

much confuſion that he ſmiled at my diſtreſs; and perhaps ſeeing that my dreſs was by no means common, 'Truly, ſweet lady,' ſaid he, 'this is a place unbefitting your appearance—do you reſide here, or are you only in theſe parts for the pleaſure of the country.' 'Neither,' anſwered I, 'I am kept here by a gentleman that is gone to Leon.' He fixed his eyes upon me with a look, as if he would have read my thoughts, which made me colour and turn away my eyes. 'Has he detained you long, madam?' ſaid he. I replied that he had not. 'And do you wiſh to ſtay any longer, my charming creature?' ſaid he, bending over his horſe; 'Will you go with me?'"

"And what anſwer did you make?" cried Lorenzo, peevifhly, and bluſhing with apprehenſion. "I returned him my thanks." "You did!" exclaimed Lorenzo; while the Count and Donna Agnes broke into a laugh which not a little irritated him; "and what then?"

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"Then he began to talk to me about my beauty, and the extreme love that he had already for me, which cauſed me to laugh, for he even made finer ſpeeches than yourſelf or Count Pandolfo. The old woman that ſat beſide me, began to be angry at my freedom as ſhe called it, and turning to the ſtranger; 'Senor,' ſaid ſhe, 'you muſt form a very ill opinion from appearances, but I aſſure you this young lady is not what you take her for.' 'I take her to be a perfect beauty,' cried he, bowing; 'and ſo, my good mother, you ſee I am not deceived.---The lady, I am ſure, will accept my protection; but as you may fear to loſe by her departure, there is a trifling compenſation. Here, Soto, take up the lady behind you, and convey her to my fiſhing-houſe;' then turning to me---'Excuſe me, dear angel,' ſaid he, in a ſoft voice, 'I cannot attend you at this moment; I am on buſineſs I cannot delay; but this evening be certain I will throw myſelf at your feet, to learn

your

your commands, and to ſee if my houſe can afford you proper accommodation.' The old woman wanted to have detained me, but I thought the company of ſo lively and handſome a young nobleman, much preferable to that of Count Pandolfo, and I gave him my hand, while he helped me to mount behind his ſervant. Having bade me adieu, and recommended me to take care of myſelf twenty times over, we ſet out different ways. Soto ran on in the praiſes of his maſter, who I found was not a prince, but a noble gentleman, named Don Guzman, an only ſon of a Grandee of the Empire, with whom I ſhould lead the life of a princeſs, and a great deal more he ſaid, which I did not underſtand. About an hour after noon we entered a delightful grove of cheſnut and ſycamore trees, interſperſed with myrtle and flowering ſhrubs, and if I had ſeen any mountains near us, I ſhould have ſuppoſed we were again in the foreſt of St. Helma. We were obliged to diſmount, and Soto leading the way,

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we ſoon came to a pleaſant little building, on the bank of a deep and ſmooth gliding ſtream, and ſo embowered with trees, that only part of the windows were viſible as we approached. 'This is the fiſhing-houſe,' ſaid Soto, 'where Don Gurman retires from the world to ſtudy. He has a paſſion for fiſhing, and keeps a little boat for that purpoſe. You will find my maſter has an excellent taſte, and is the moſt generous man in Spain.'

I have found all men ready to ſerve me, thought I, ſitting down on an elegant ſeat. The world is not ſo bad, as Don Raphael would have made me believe. He himſelf has been the only man who endeavoured to hurt me, while he painted all the reſt of mankind deceitful and cruel. I looked round upon ſome elegant paintings and beautiful furniture. Soto left me, after ſetting before me ſome ſweetmeats, nuts, and wine; and charmed with the ſtillneſs of the place, I went and ſat down in the window, which hung over the water.

The

The delightful scenery which formed the distant objects of the view, enchanted me. The water reflected the trees invertedly on the opposite shore, and I watched the clouds, as they seemed to glide through the tranquil stream. When I was tired with this trifling amusement, and had gazed upon the landscape till I was weary; I took up a volume of Ariosto, and fastening back the lattice, I sometimes read a few lines, then gazed upon the country, then thought upon you, Lorenzo, and how you would have been charmed with such a situation; and then wondered Don Guzman did not appear.

The sweet stillness that surrounded me, was stolen upon by some distant strains of music, such as I had never heard before; they seemed to draw nearer, and float along the water. I listened with attention to this pleasing concert, which evidently drew nearer, and it was not long before a light vessel, with a covered awning, rowed gently along the stream. Three or four people

were

were playing, while an elderly gentleman, ſat reclining upon a cuſhion of velvet, in an open cabin of great richneſs. He looked up towards the window where I ſat, and no ſooner perceived me, than his countenance changed, and he ſaid ſome words to the rowers, in a very angry tone, and in a moment the boat ſhot out of ſight. In a few minutes, I heard ſome perſon run up the ſtairs, and throwing open the door with violence, the ſame gentleman I had ſeen in the boat, entered the room, and threw himſelf in great anger upon a chair, while he fixed his eyes upon me, with a mixture of ſurprize and vexation."

'By whoſe authority, madam,' ſaid he, 'are you here?'

I replied, "that Don Guzman had ſent me hither, with his ſervant Soto, and I expected him here every minute."

'Tis well---'tis very well,' cried he, 'I will ſoon terminate his ſtudies. My houſe was too noiſy--he had the head-ache; but if you remain, I ſhall have the heart-ache.

ache. You muſt remove hence; Don Guzman is my ſon, ſo you muſt pack up your baggage, and look out for other quarters."

"I have no baggage," replied I, trembling, for his roughneſs frightened me. "Don Guzman promiſed me his protection, and I have no place to go to."

'He deceived you then,' cried the Conde, 'he has no power to protect you, he has betrayed you, and ſeeks your deſtruction.—Who are you?'

"I am the wife of Cavalier Lorenzo de Ferara," replied I.

'You a wife,' cried he, 'ſo young, ſo handſome, and in this ſituation. Has my ſon been ſo abandoned a villain?'

"Senor," anſwered I, "Don Guzman has not injured me. I do not underſtand what you mean; but it ſeems to me, that all the men of your years would make me believe, that thoſe who are younger, are all ready to deſtroy me, while all the young flatter, and ſtrive to do me ſervice."

"He

"He gazed at me some time, without reply. 'You tell me you are married,' said he, in a tone of more complacency, 'where is your husband?'

"'In the grave,' answered I.

'Dead!' cried he: 'How long have you known my son? and how long have you lived in this place?'

"'I have known Don Guzman,' replied I, 'only about ten minutes, as he alighted his horse, and a handsome gentleman he is; and I have been in this place three or four hours expecting him.'

'There is some mystery,' muttered he, asking me innumerable questions, and he was several times in astonishment at my answers. 'Well, my dear Cornelia,' said he, 'though you seem to have a particular predilection for young men, I, who am neither very old nor very young, will venture a proposal to you, which if your inclinations are virtuous, as your words lead me to believe, you will not hesitate to accept. I learn that you are an orphan and unprotected,

unprotected. Your singular expressions excite my astonishment; a young lady like you cannot be seen without danger, and a thousand plans will be laid to destroy you, which your want of suspicion would not detect till too late. I will send you to Madrid, and pension you in a society of amiable and pious ladies, where you will be protected from every insult, and lead a life of happiness and virtue. Do you accept my proposal, and promise me you will not willingly see or converse with my son?

"I gave him my promise without hesitation; then rising, he took me by the hand, and conducted me to the boat. The Conde gave me many instructions as we sailed along the river, and I blushed at finding that I knew little more than a child. He directed me how to behave at Madrid, and if I behaved with propriety, he would regard me as his own daughter. Under his direction I was entered as boarder in the convent, where I have remained ever since, and where, attending Donna Agnes the other day,

ture her return might claim, and while he attempted to ſay thoſe things, his pleaſure in her preſence inſpired, his thoughts involuntarily recurred to the Marquis, her father, who lay breathleſs in the houſe, and the unfortunate Chriſtiana, in whoſe breaſt remained but one ray of earthly hope, which was now to be extinguiſhed; and he ſhuddered for the conſequences.

Ignorant as was Cornelia of the world, and its manners, ſhe wanted not penetration to perceive that Lorenzo acted under ſome reſtraint, and that his words did not accord with a certain air of coldneſs, which hung upon his features. He did not entreat her to remain beyond the time themſelves propoſed, and twice he hinted that that time was nearly elapſed.

The Count who ſhared in the feelings of his friend, checked his own deſire of detaining Lady Agnes; and having informed her of her father's rapid amendment, they returned in company to the convent, protected

tected by two ſervants, well armed, carrying lanthorns.

After the Count and Lorenzo took leave of the ladies, the latter could not conceal his opinion of this adventure. "I am not altogether pleaſed myſelf," replied the Count; "but I know Lady Agnes has a ſpirit for theſe exploits; any other woman would have loſt my eſteem, had ſhe conſented to leave her father's houſe, notwithſtanding circumſtances. But this lady has, from her birth, been uncontrouled, and her ſpirit is high and romantic. As to Cornelia, ſhe appears to me to have no formed character. In this world, ſhe is little above a child, and it depends on the ſociety with which ſhe ſhall live, to ſtamp upon her the impreſſion, which will give features to her mind. Native goodneſs, ſhe certainly poſſeſſes, and for thoſe who can be charmed with uncultivated beauty, ſhe is a gem ſuperior to price. I remarked, however, that exterior ſhew has a powerful attraction, and when you remember, that moſt things

are new to her eyes, you will not wonder, though you will have ſome unpleaſant ſenſations to ſuppreſs, till you have introduced her into life."

"Rather ſay," replied Lorenzo, "till ſhe is again carried back to the retirement of an obſcure retreat; for how ſhould I, without any eſtabliſhment, ſupport myſelf in Madrid. I had intention of ſeeking out Count Pandolfo, and by revealing myſelf to him, claim his protection; for I have too much reaſon to believe, that my fate is in his hands. But if he could act ſo meanly with regard to Cornelia, when he knew her to be my wife, what moral tie might be ſuppoſed to bind him? Even Don Raphael, with all his irreconcileable ſpirit of revenge, and inborn hatred of mankind, is to me a preferable character. His ſoul is ſuperior to thoſe low and contemptible vices which degrade the ſpecies, and his errors ariſe from too exalted an opinion of virtue, and a diſappointed mind. Fortunate, indeed, would it have been, had I never known his name."

"I perceive," ſaid the Count, "that the ardour of your paſſion for Cornelia is cooled, but you do her conſiderable wrong. I confeſs Chriſtiana is greatly to be pitied, if pity would adminiſter relief. I think that it were to be wiſhed that you ſhould not meet any more. I will take upon myſelf to make her acquainted with this unforeſeen event; and I will accept your office of guardian, and become reſponſible for her eſtabliſhment, in whataver way ſhe ſhall prefer."

Lorenzo had ſcarce time to thank his friend, before they reached home, when they immediately retired to reſt, or to reflect on the ſhifting ſcenes of fortune.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

WHEN Lorenzo aroſe in the morning he haſtened to the library, where he expected to find his friend, that he might inſtruct him in many things he wiſhed to ſay to Chriſtiana. He found the Count ſitting with melancholy on his countenance, and his arms folded.

"I am come----" ſaid Lorenzo.

"Don't ſay a word," cried the Count: "It is all over:---you have loſt an angel, and found a woman.---Heavens, Sir, I would have given half my fortune that it had been my fate, ſo to be loved by her. Even now I might be tempted (if ſhe would not conſider my addreſſes as an inſult) to forſake

Lady

Lady Agnes, and offer her my hand. I tell you, you have loſt an angel, and muſt have been ſtupid or blind."

"I know it," replied Lorenzo; "but why this warmth?"

"I am chagrined," replied the Count, who had taken up this tone that he might bear down the grief which ſtruggled in his breaſt.

"Tell me what this lovely creature ſaid, and what ſhe intends to do," ſaid Lorenzo.

"She, ſaid what did her honour, and will do what alone remains for her to do!" anſwered the Count.

Lorenzo knew not how to underſtand this anſwer; he perceived that ſomething greatly diſturbed his friend; and feeling himſelf hurt by this coolneſs; "I am ignorant," ſaid he, "of the interpretation you intend me to make of theſe words. If my actions have forfeited your eſteem, I at leaſt have a right to aſk how."

"You have no occaſion for this queſtion," cried the Count, ſtretching out his hand to him. "I confeſs I am ſtrangely affected by the virtues of this excellent lady, and am ſeriouſly conſidering, whether I have not been, like you, blinded in my choice of Donna Agnes; whether it is her virtue or only the beauty of her perſon, and a certain attraction of manners, that has led me into an engagement, which, perhaps, will be no ſo ſooner formed, than I ſhall wiſh it diſſolved for ever."

"Do you ſee any parallel between your caſe and mine?" ſaid Lorenzo.

"I do," replied the Count. "You were engaged by the beauty of Cornelia; you could only have a ſuperficial knowledge of her virtues; but her image haunted your fancy, and your whole ſoul bent to the attainment of its object. Prepoſſeſſed and blinded as you were, you had no eyes to behold in Chriſtiana not only ſimiliarity of features, but thoſe features finiſhed by the impreſſive touches of

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an heavenly mind; poſſeſſing at the ſame time all the known perfection which can render a woman the real object of a pure and durable affection.——Yet you wanted reſolution to overcome the prior impreſſions; and how know I, but at this moment I am led away by the ſame deluſion?"

"But Cornelia is ſtill the object of my regard," ſaid Lorenzo.

"And may ſhe always merit to be ſo," anſwered the Count: "far be it from me to depreciate her value in your eyes: there are not many women indeed who would bear a compariſon with Donna Chriſtiana."

He then informed Lorenzo, that Chriſtiana had declined to ſee her ſiſter, being too weak to ſtand ſo great a ſhock, and that ſhe had finally reſolved to retire to ſome convent, where ſhe propoſed to take the vows, but what eſtabliſhment ſhe ſhould prefer, ſhe had not determined.

Their diſcourſe was interrupted by a ſervant with a billet, and ſaying, that a meſſenger waited for an anſwer. The

Count immediately broke the ſeal, and was not a little perplexed at the contents. "It is a letter from the Duke of Arragon. Buſineſs, ſays he, of a particular and private nature requires my immediate attendance in company with a Cavalier Lorenzo, and excuſing himſelf for not waiting on us by reaſon of his illneſs.

"I know not," ſaid the Count, "what can be the purport of this meſſage: whether it relates to his daughter or to Don Raphael, with whom you have had ſo intimate a connection. I am of an opinion, there can be no danger in complying with his requeſt."

"Certainly not," ſaid Lorenzo. "I am perfectly indifferent----let the meſſenger know we will quickly follow."

They waited only to make a ſlight breakfaſt, haſtening to the palace of the Duke, to whom they were introduced. He was ſitting upon a ſopha, with many writings ſcattered about him, and yet pale with his wound. The colour flushed into his

his cheeks at the Count's entrance; but while Lorenzo preſented himſelf, he gazed upon him with viſible ſurprize.

"How are you, Aranda?" ſaid he, "let me beg you to be ſeated—is this your friend Lorenzo? May I inquire from what part of Spain you are?"

This queſtion threw Lorenzo into ſome confuſion, and he replied, "of Toledo."

"My note would ſurprize you," ſaid he, turning careleſſly to the Count, without taking notice of Lorenzo's confuſion. "It is a matter of ſome conſequence to the honour of my family, which induced me to ſend to you."

"Give me leave to hope," ſaid the Count, "that my admiſſion to any family in Caſtille would be no diſgrace. There was a time—"

"I was not ſaying—I did not mean to inſinuate any thing on that ſubject," interrupted the Duke. "Let it ſleep for the preſent; I have received information that the

the Marquis de Mirandula is actually dead, and that he now lies at your houſe."

"It is unfortunately too true," anſwered the Count.

"Were you both preſent when this tranſaction took place? It was a ſingular hour for the church to be open, and equally ſo that you three ſhould be within its walls. Had you any connection with the funeral of the lady? Do you know her name?" inquired the Duke.

The Count anſwered that it was by accident that they were invited by the pomp of the proceſſion; but he believed that Lorenzo was better informed.

The Duke had repeatedly caſt his eyes upon Lorenzo, with no little tokens of wonder, and now turning to him, he deſired him to ſay if he knew who the lady was.

Lorenzo admired this precaution, but having no particular deſire to conceal his knowledge of circumſtances, which the abſence of father Timotheus prevented him

him ſooner from diſcloſing, he anſwered, that the name of the lady was Almedia, and that he had but too much reaſon to know her rank and connections.

The Duke betrayed ſome confuſion, ſhifting his ſeat, and changing colour. "May I inquire, then," ſaid he, "what was her rank and connection?"

"She was the wife of Don Raphael; and I have too much reaſon to believe ſhe was—" "What?" cried the Duke; for Lorenzo found that he was expoſing his own ſecret, and checked himſelf. "Say what!" "She was my mother!" "Impoſſible!" cried the Duke: "I am well aware that this Don Raphael has no children."

"Your Excellenza, perhaps, is better informed than myſelf," replied Lorenzo. "Though I have every reaſon to believe that this was my mother, I have not the ſame motives to ſuppoſe Don Raphael to be my father. If you are acquainted with the private life of this lady, you may readily

readily conceive my reaſons for believing myſelf her ſon."

"This is a little myſterious," ſaid the Duke, biting his lips, as if ſtudying what he ſhould ſay. "Then you are in fact ignorant of your parents?—I aſk your pardon for my abruptneſs, Cavalier Lorenzo, but I am intereſted in the affairs of this madman, Don Raphael."

"I know," anſwered Lorenzo. "You have very wonderful knowledge," replied the Duke, peeviſhly. "Pray how came you to know ſo much? particularly the private life of a lady who has been for ſo many years ſecluded from ſociety?"

"It was by accident ſhe confeſſed herſelf to me;" ſaid Lorenzo.

"Impoſſible!" exclaimed the Duke; "a mother, and ſuch a mother, confeſs herſelf to her ſon!"

"It is not leſs true than ſtrange," replied Lorenzo. "It was by a ſingular accident, I was conducted to the ſide of her bed as ſhe was dying. I knew her not

till

till that moment. I had no ſuſpicion of my birth; having been held in ignorance, and ſupplied by unknown friends."

"And who are thoſe friends?" ſaid the Duke. "I am impatient---I am intereſted in this buſineſs, as it concerns my elder brother."

"Your Excellenza," ſaid the Count, "has diſcloſed to us your own ſecret, and confirmed our ſuſpicions; but be certain you have nothing to apprehend. Lorenzo has ſuffered from Don Raphael the outrage and perſecution of inveterate hatred; and were you acquainted with the ſingular concatenation of events which have at length thrown ſome ray of light on the darkneſs of his fate, you would perceive the powerful effect of inviſible influence."

The Duke ſmiled---"You have not, then," ſaid he, "overcome thoſe ridiculous fancies? I ſhould have thought the apprehenſion of Mahmut, and his expoſure, would have ſatisfied you of ſuch impoſture. This man has been long obſerved

ſerved by Government. His exterior of virtue was a garb for the baſeſt of purpoſes---the ſeduction of men's minds from the eſtabliſhed *Religion* and *Regulations* of their country; and the miſchief was the more to be dreaded, as he had moſt power over men of virtue and eccentric genius. I was well informed that you were one of his votaries. I knew that your mind was only biaſſed by the ſublime and ſplendid hypotheſes, which he ſpread before his diſciples, like a garden of flowers, to lure their ſteps to deſtruction; and this, my dear Count, was my ſecret reaſon for denying you my daughter. This Mahmut is a ſpy: he affects religion, virtue, morality, philanthropy, and univerſal benevolence; but how do theſe virtues agree with the moſt deteſtable of human characters?---a man who prys into the councils of nations, and undermines the principles of individuals;---he who ſeeks privately to ruin his neighbour, is an angel to him who would undermine nations, and involve king-

kingdoms in bloodſhed. Such is a public ſpy; and ſuch is the ſilver-tongued Mahmut."

"I acknowledge my folly," ſaid the Count: "your charming daughter has been my phyſician; but who would have believed that ſo much venom was lodged beneath ſo fair an exterior?"

"The water is moſt deep where the ſurface is ſmootheſt," replied the Duke. "It was known that your principles were ſound, though your fancy might have corrupted you; and your general character produced you exemption from arreſt:—not ſo with your high prieſt; he is an arch villain, and is delivered over to the Inquiſition. Theſe, however, are only ſubjects for future diſcuſſion. Matters of much more moment are before us. It excites my ſurprize how your friend ſhould have gained ſo intimate a knowledge of Don Raphael; I believed that no man in the world but myſelf, knew his ſituation and connections."

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ſerved by Government. [illegible] virtue was a garb for [illegible] the poſes—the ſeduction of [illegible] me the eſtabliſhed *Relig* [illegible] of their country; [illegible] en in more to be dread [illegible] ever at over men of v[illegible] I was well inf[illegible] acre for nearly two his votaries, only biaſſ[illegible] looked aſtoniſhed: "You hypothe[illegible]onder," ſaid he, "that I am not diſcipl[illegible] ſurprized that any man could ſo their unbend the haughty Don Raphael, Co[illegible]formerly Duke of Aragon) ſince you muſt yo[illegible]now him. But now if you dare place h[illegible] confidence in me, I would aſk you to repeat the confeſſion of Lady Almedia; and if you will add to it a ſketch of your own life, it may turn to more account than at preſent you imagine."

Lorenzo had admired the manners of the Duke, which exhibited good ſenſe, penetration, and the eaſy dignity of confirmed nobility. "I cannot now," ſaid he, "take up ſo much of your Excellenza's attention, as to enter deeply into my own hiſtory;

herwiſe intereſt you, but as
ur family, of which, till
of the moſt diſtant
tranſiently glanced
narrative till the time
Madrid, with his firſt ad-
carrying off Lady Agnes.

"Then it was *you*," exclaimed the Duke, "who did me that favour? I had placed it to the account of Aranda, till I had certain information of his innocence. In truth this would almoſt tempt me to believe in ſecret influences myſelf."

Lorenzo proceeded without remark on the Duke's exclamation, till he led them to the chamber of the dying lady. "You muſt perceive," ſaid he, that my own ſafety was involved in betraying myſelf, and this laid me under the neceſſity of attending to a confeſſion, which fixed me with aſtoniſhment to the ſide of the bed, and you will readily believe my emotion, at hearing theſe words: 'Holy father,' ſaid the lady, 'I cannot die in peace without

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out making full confeſſion of my ſins; but alas! I fear my repentance comes too late. I was the wife of a nobleman---the heir of Arrogan, a Grandee of the Empire, and Knight of the Golden Fleece. I had a ſon by my firſt huſband, whoſe bed I betrayed, though not till after the birth of that ſon. The cruel rage of his father, deſtroyed my ſeducer before my eyes, and afterwards murdered my ſon. I was obliged to fly to a diſtant part of Spain, and to aſſume a fictitious name. My fortune remained entire, and I received it through the hands of an officer, whom I had known abroad. My ſecret he made the foundation of his preſumption, and preſented himſelf to me as a lover. I acknowledge with ſhame, holy Father, that I yielded to his perſuaſions, and thus, a ſecond time, betrayed the honour of a huſband, who was become a monſter in my eyes. To this inſidious lover, I had a ſon, named Lorenzo. The ſecreſy with which I was obliged to live, to avoid the vengeance of my huſband,

obliged

obliged me to place this boy with a cottager, from whom, I was informed, he was ſoon after ſtolen, and I have never ſeen him ſince. My faithleſs lover, whoſe name was Pandolfo, contrived to plunder me of my fortune; but finding that I would no longer ſupply his extravagance, he left me. My huſband died, as I learnt, raving mad, though I dared not truſt the report ſo far as to appear again in public. Near two years ſince I received a letter from Count Pandolfo, which informed me that my ſon yet lived; that he had been placed by him in the convent of Benedictines; that after ſtudying at Toledo, he had entered the army; and that being himſelf very much embarraſſed, he had no money to ſpare him, and ſhould leave him in future to my generoſity.

'I conſidered this tale as a mere fabrication, to lead me to ſupply his own wants, and for ſome time I remained inactive.

'Chancing to travel near Toledo, I had curioſity enough to inquire at the mentioned convent; and to my aſtoniſhment learnt

learnt that ſo far the information was correct. Struck with remorſe, I immediately diſpatched a monk to Leon, to examine into the ſituation of my ſon; but he returned only to overwhelm me with grief, by detailing to me a horrid narrative of his having been murdered before his eyes, by that deteſtable wretch.

'But, holy Father! how great are my crimes, and how wonderful the myſteries of providence! this very Don Raphael was my huſband.

'As I journeyed from Toledo, and before the return of the monk, I was ſtopped at the ſide of a thicket by two ruffians, who when they beheld me remembered my perſon, and declared they would convey me priſoner to my huſband; unleſs I would engage to ſend to this very place a large ſum of money, equal to what Don Raphael would give for my perſon.

"Ah!" ſaid I, "is that villain yet living!—I would give double the money to be rid of him for ever."

"Say

"Say no more," ſaid one of them, with a ſavage grin, and a low voice. "We will bring you his head to this very ſpot, and that moſt willingly; for we have an account to ſettle. Ten days hence we will meet you."

I agreed to this horrid compact, and they ſet out; but by the monk's account he muſt muſt have found means to detect, and to arreſt their purpoſes, for it could have been no other than theſe two miſcreants who aſſiſted him to deſtroy my ſon.

"O God!" cried I, unable any longer to attend in ſilence. "Am I then your ſon? Is Count Pandolfo my father? and is Don Raphael the injured huſband? whoſe every outrage to me, was a judgment of retributive juſtice."

"Ah!" cried ſhe, wildly ſtarting. "Whom do I ſee?---O hide me---O Don Raphael!---mercy---"

Her voice ſunk away beneath her efforts to ſpeak; her eyes cloſed; and find-

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ing myſelf ready to faint with a ſtrange ſtupor which ſwam before my eyes, I ſunk back in a chair, where for ſome time my ſenſes wholly failed me, and when the ſervants recovered me, the lady was dead." Here Lorenzo remained ſilent, and the Duke regarded him with a fixed and earneſt attention.

"This, then," ſaid the Duke, "is all the evidence you have of your relationſhip to Count Pandolfo? What benefit do you expect from the ſucceſs of your claim? I ſhould conceive that it were better you ſunk your knowledge in ſilence. I know Count Pandolfo—he is overwhelmed in debt, and has been lately tricked into marriage with an infamous woman, who has more than doubled thoſe debts. He has been the principal means of traducing your character, and at this moment I have a charge from him againſt you for high treaſon. To my knowledge Lady Almedia has left you the whole of her fortune, by a deed which is dated before ſhe ſuppoſed you dead,

dead, and immediately upon her firſt arrival at Toledo. This teſtament is in the hands of father Timotheus, whom I have ſeen, but who cannot appear till after the fate of Don Raphael is determined. On this account it is that I have ſent for you, and I have a plan in train which will arrange every intereſt. For political reaſons Don Raphael cannot be brought to public retribution. The honour of our family will not permit it. But we muſt engage that he ſhall not again have power to perform theſe miſchievous exploits. We have alſo ſufficient teſtimony that he is not maſter of his reaſon."

"That no man can doubt," ſaid Lorenzo. "I myſelf would bear witneſs, that his mind is actually deranged. But I thought he had eſcaped from the officers of juſtice."

The Duke ſmiled. "We manage theſe things," ſaid he; "but it is not for all the world to know how. I ſhall diſcharge the order for your arreſt, and you may remain perfectly ſatisfied that Don Raphael ſhall

not interrupt your repose. Count Pandolfo is at present concealed from his wife and creditors; but being still on our list as an officer, I am acquainted with his residence. What can be more eligiable than giving him apartments at the castle of St Helma, where he will be released from all his ties, and may keep Don Raphael in safety? It remains only for both of you to sign this protestation, that you believe his insanity; as you were witness to the deplorable catastrophe of the Marquis de Mirandula, who, by this event, has been saved from the more unfortunate tragedy of a public execution; his steps being watched, and all his actions known. Thus you see how absurd it is for men to plot against the state in fancied security, when our watchfulness is such that their very thoughts are guessed at."

Lorenzo had heard, without surprize, of the warrant for his own arrest, and felt himself relieved from a considerable trouble, in the security that he might now expect.

pect. The behaviour of Count Pandolfo, and the advice of the Duke, determined him to conceal the illegality of the Count's marriage with Ippolita, and with a heart much lighter than he poſſeſſed ſome hours before, he took leave of the Duke in company with his friend, who received a polite invitation to renew the viſit; and his hopes were not a little raiſed towards a reconciliation.

On their return, they learnt that Lady Chriſtiana, with a compoſure and fortitude which roſe above the weakneſs of her ſex, and of herſelf, had taken a farewel of the remains of her father, and retired, without leaving a note to ſay where.

The funeral of the Marquis engaged their attention; and after ſome days Lorenzo was ſurprized by a viſit from the monk Timotheus, who informed him that he had been ſuddenly arreſted, and confined, by order from the Duke of Arragon, but had been releaſed, and all the papers belonging to Lady Almedia returned to

him: that his arreſt had prevented his publicly appearing againſt Don Raphael, whom he found had eſcaped.

Lorenzo could not but admire the policy of the Duke, and without hinting at his own knowledge, he ſuffered father Timotheus to remain in ignorance of Don Raphael's ſituation; receiving account of Lady Almedia's fortune with ſatisfaction, as it ſet him at once above want, and allowed him the liberty of following his own inclinations in his choice of life.

Meanwhile Count Pandolfo, with the utmoſt ſecrecy and diſpatch, conveyed Don Raphael to the caſtle of St. Helen, without whoſe walls he was not to ſuffer his priſoner to paſs; a degree of reſtraint but ill ſuited to the boiſterous paſſions of a man accuſtomed to implicit obedience.

But it was not long that he felt this reſtraint, which had urged him to ſeveral extravagant acts of outrage, and more than once endangered the life of the Count. The fever of his blood, the frenzy of his paſſions,

paſſions, and the remorſe of his conſci ence, altogether conſpiring, very ſhortly deranged his underſtanding; and one of the moſt ſingular chimeras, which poſſibly ever fixed itſelf in the mind of inſanity, entirely overcame him. His eyes were conſtantly bent upon the ground, and his brow contracted with the darkeſt frown. He ſcarce regarded any thing that paſſed around him; and he beheld the Count with a contemptuous and ſilent gaze, as a creature infinitely beneath him. He believed that his ſoul had forſaken his body, and rambled at large over the mountains of Leon, like the ſtrange and myſterious phantom, Lorenzo had ſeen, or fancied that he had ſeen, fleeting with the ſhades of night upon the wings of the wind.

But while his ſoul was thus rambling at liberty, he fancied that his forſaken body, doomed to live for the expiation of his crimes, was become a mere animal, capable only of animal functions; and thus he had two exiſtences at the ſame time.

Bewildered in this profound abſurdity, he took no pleaſure in any thing that was offered to his view; and if he was conducted into a chamber, he made no attempts to remove. He took no delight in the beauties of nature, when for the ſake of his health the Count led him into the garden; for while he was thus a priſoner he believed himſelf at liberty, and that he enjoyed the moſt unbounded freedom. While he remained baſking in the garden, with his eyes fullenly half cloſed, he would imagine himſelf traverſing the hills, ſometimes liſtening to the whiſpers of the grove or the falling of water: ſometimes watching the flocks, while the ſhepherd told his love to ſome maid of the valley: or ſitting on a fragment of rock torn from the brow of the mountains, he liſtened to the tremendous ſtorm, undiſmayed by the lightning, and unwet by the rain. But while his ſpirit enjoyed this exceſs of imaginary delight, he conſidered his body as nothing ſuperior to animal and confined exiſtence, and

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that it was incapable of all enjoyment and all rational exertion. If he ate, it was becauſe all other animals did the ſame; and the beams of the ſun were, to him, the extreme of enjoyment. Notwithſtanding this habitual conviction, he would at times converſe with the Count in the moſt rational manner, on any, and every ſubject; and an unintereſted perſon could not have detected the turn of his mind, but by the ſullen look of his eye, and the ſallow gloom of his countenance.

CHAP. VI.

AT Madrid the Duke ſpeedily recovered from his wound, and at the repeated intreaties of Count Aranda and his daughter, conſented at length to their union, which he determined ſhould be celebrated with ſplendor ſuitable to her birth.

Lorenzo, already happy in the certain poſſeſſion of the lovely and engaging Cornelia, had taken a ſmall houſe on the banks of the river, about a quarter of a league from the city, where he hoped to diverſify ſolitude with the charms of ſociety, when he ſhould be ſo inclined: but he found himſelf under the neceſſity of frequently mingling in the gay circles of life

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at the inſtigation of Cornelia, who was far more delighted with thoſe ſplendid ſcenes than he either wiſhed or deſired.

This propenſity he thought it would be better to ſatiate than reſtrain. Nothing could be more natural than for a lively girl to wiſh to ſee all the varieties of that world to which ſhe was ſo new, that it appeared like thoſe tales of enchantment ſhe had read at the old caſtle.

Lorenzo was in hopes that a very ſhort time would ſuffice to expoſe the folly of frequently entering aſſemblies, where the eye and the ear were the only ſenſes gratified, and from which the mind returned with diſguſt and ennui. But he found himſelf deceived; and he beheld, with regret, that a day paſſed alone with him, at his little retreat, ſeemed ſacrificed from exiſtence, and was clouded with ſilence.

The marriage of the Count and Lady Agnes approached, and Cornelia would talk of nothing elſe but the ſplendid preparations, and the elegance of the habit

her friend was to wear. To gratify her, Lorenzo beſtowed upon her a conſiderable ſum in jewels, propoſing in his own mind that he would ſhortly retire into ſome ſequeſtered ſituation, where, at a diſtance from temptation, he might lead her mind to more worthy purſuits.

The day arrived which was to accompliſh the wiſhes of the Count, and the ceremony was performed with the utmoſt ſplendor before the ſacred altar, and the preſence of that inviſible Being, who beholds all things, and who, by creating an equal diviſion of ſexes, has ordained, beyond controverſy, that but one woman ſhall be the wife of one man. A ſumptuous entertainment was prepared at the palace of the Duke, and in the evening the amuſements began with a ball brilliantly and numerouſly attended.

The Count, after opening the ball, declined farther exerciſe, propoſing to Lorenzo to accept his lady for a partner, while he entered into converſation with the

various

various nobility that graced the room. Cornelia was thus left to the converſation of ſtrangers, who having ſeen her familiarity with this noble family, were ready to pay her every attention.

Amongſt others, advanced a gentleman in the moſt gay attire the room could boaſt, nor were his perſon and manners inferior to his appearance. All the young men of faſhion gave him the precedence, and the whiſpers of the ladies endeavoured to catch his attention; but he had for ſome time fixed his regard upon Cornelia, and after making a few inquiries, he approached her with a look of confidence, and a ſmile of inſinuation.

Cornelia bluſhed, to be thus addreſſed, and more ſo, when ſhe recollected the voice of Don Guzman, who took a ſeat beſide her, with aſſumed familiarity, and entered into converſation, partly by whiſpers, and partly by ſmiles. It was eaſy to perceive, that his preſence was not unpleaſant; and whether by chance or deſign, he

inquired

inquired if Cornelia could inform him, who that awkard perſon was, who was dancing with the new married lady.

"His countenance," ſaid he, "is enough to ſtrike all the company with melancholy, and he walks this lively dance with as much gravity as a criminal at an act of faith."

"That gentleman," ſaid Cornelia, half diſpleaſed, and half ſmiling, "is my huſband. He whom I thought had been dead, when I ſaw you at the old woman's cottage door."

"It was an unfortunate thing for me," replied Don Guzman. "Why did I not know you earlier, or not know you at all? Have you been long in Madrid? Do you reſide in town? Shall I ſee you again? I have been wandering all over the world in ſearch of you."

Any woman converſant with the world, and pretending to modeſty, would have been alarmed, and offended at theſe queſtions, but unfortunately the ignorance of Cornelia laid her open to the moſt glaring flattery,

flattery, and the ſenſe of her own innocence prevented her detecting the ill intentions of another. To all the queſtions of Don Guzman, ſhe replied with the unguarded ſimplicity of a child, and before ſhe was joined by Lorenzo, he had learnt all that he deſired to know. He left her when the dance ended, taking care that his perſon ſhould not be out of ſight, and which every way he moved, was attended by a levee of ſeveral ladies. He directed many glances towards Cornelia, and vanity triumphed in his laughing eye, when he ſaw that ſhe returned them with ſmiles.

Lorenzo remarked the familiarity of this ſtranger, and was not a little alarmed, when he learnt his name. "I ſee," ſaid he to himſelf, "it is neceſſary that I ſhould withdraw from the circles of glitter and faſcination. I muſt cut off at once, the temptations of general company, by ſelecting ſome retirement, ſuited to my own feelings, and the education of Cornelia. Her mind has received its character, and

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the impreſſion will be durable. In the caſtle, in the foreſt of St. Helms, I was the moſt engaging perſon ſhe had ſeen, and on me ſhe placed her fancy; but in Madrid, where thouſands equal and ſurpaſs me, what certainty have I, that her mind will not waver in its choice, and without actual guilt, I may become indifferent in her eyes. Let us then retire to ſome narrow circle, where I again may ſhine, and no doubt Cornelia will centre all her affections on myſelf."

Theſe thoughts naturally ſpread uneaſineſs upon his features, which was by no means a favourable contraſt to the volatile and gay Don Guzman, moving round the room, with a compliment to every one, and joining in the dance with ſo much vivacity and ſpirit, that Cornelia was chagrined at her own incapacity, and looked upon his partner with envy.

The company departed very early in the night, and Lorenzo with his bride, accompanied the new married pair to the houſe

of

of the Count, where they had a ſet of rooms always ready for their reception, when occaſion obliged them to be abſent from their rural villa.

Cornelia made no concealment of the pleaſure ſhe had taken at the ball, expreſſing a wiſh, that every day in the year could be paſſed with ſo much delight.

"Truly, Lorenzo," ſaid ſhe, "while I lived with Don Raphael, in that diſmal old place, I knew nothing of life. One day was juſt the ſame as another, and no party of pleaſure, ever exhilarated the depreſſion of our ſpirits. A ramble in the foreſt was an exceſſive favour. The books that I read were a few old romances, and lumbering homilies, and the muſic that I played, was all without ſpirit."

"And were you leſs happy then, my dear Cornelia?" ſaid Lorenzo.

"What a queſtion!" replied ſhe, "Do you not remember that you told me yourſelf, how much more happy I ſhould be in the world; how many wonders I ſhould

ſee,

ſee, of which I had no idea, and did not you laugh at me, when I mentioned the dangers Don Raphael had taught me to expect from acquaintance with man? You have ſhewn me that all my fears were fooliſh, and I thank you for making me ſo happy."

"But aſk yourſelf," ſaid Lorenzo, "if this be real happineſs, or only the fleeting joy of a moment? For my part I ſee nothing in it, but what is very agreeable at times, as a relief to more ſerious purſuits."

"Where is the uſe of theſe ſerious purſuits?" anſwered Cornelia. "Do they make you any happier? To ſay truth, I do not think you look ſo well ſerious as gay, and I am ſure my heart is never more happy, than when free from care."

"You will, however, ſoon tire with pleaſure, whoſe fameneſs will cloy, and then you will ſigh for the tranquillity of retirement," ſaid Lorenzo.

"It may be ſo," ſaid ſhe, with a careleſs air, "but I think it will be a long time firſt."

Lorenzo

Lorenzo was aware that gentleneſs alone, would be the means of pointing out the folly of thus ſpending time. Her candour convinced him of the goodneſs of her heart, and the purity of her intentions.

Without appearing to place himſelf as a cenſor of her conduct, he determined to watch with vigilance over her ſteps, and by the ſtrictneſs of his attendance, to cut off the hopes which Don Guzman might form. In purſuance of this plan, he never attempted to reſtrain her acceptance of any invitation, ſtill taking care to be of the party, which fruſtrated all the deſigns the artful Don Guzman contrived, to gain the ear of Cornelia, to whom his eyes explained all that he meant, in a language ſo plain and univerſal, that all generations of men have underſtood it.

The difficulty this obſtacle threw in the way, was a freſh ſtimulus to the ardour of Don Guzman, and having been provoked at the trick his father had put upon him, conſidered that his character for

enterprize

enterprize was concerned in the accomplishment of his designs.

Count Pandolfo, when he undertook the charge of Don Raphael, left behind him his suppoſed wife Ippolita; who, though now in the wane of years, contrived by being uſeful to a ſociety of diſſolute young men, to ſubſiſt, and even move in many circles of genteel company. This woman, Don Guzman made the the confidante of his wiſhes, and ſtimulated her invention by the promiſe of a conſiderable preſent.

"What you enact of me," ſaid ſhe, "is a trifle, I will engage that this ignorant girl will fly into your hands, in leſs than a month."

"That is by no means my deſign," replied Don Guzman. "No man of ſenſe would burden himſelf with married women, when he has one already to take her off his hands. Cannot you contrive to gain me admiſſion into the houſe?"

"I have it," replied the infamous Ippolita, with a laugh of malicious triumph.

"This

"This Lorenzo, was once a captive of mine, and for particular reaſons I would have married him. I could even now raiſe him to a rank far above his preſent ſituation, with a ſingle word, but he once ſlighted my charms, and a woman never can forgive ſuch an outrage. I will endeavour again to attract him, either by ſentiments of kindneſs, or hints of the ſecrets I poſſeſs. He will certainly attend my ſummons, and you ſhall improve the advantage as you pleaſe."

Not many hours after this league of iniquity, Lorenzo received a letter at his country houſe from Ippolita, couched in the moſt tender and preſſing terms: conjuring him to fly to her, that ſhe might convince him of his former error in ſuſpecting her conduct.

Lorenzo ſhuddered while he read this miſerable epiſtle. "This depraved woman," ſaid he, "muſt be ignorant of the ſecret of my birth. She knows not that I am the ſon of Count Pandolfo. Unfortunate wretch,

wretch, and wicked as unfortunate, to attempt, by this means, to interrupt the domeſtic happines of a family. Little does ſhe think that I was preſent at the impoſition played upon Count Pandolfo, whom I will certainly inform of the deception he labours under."

To this letter Lorenzo made no reply, and the next day produced another in a very different ſtile, hinting that ſhe could inform him of the real ſecret of his birth, and threatening to expoſe his former connection with her to his wife.

"Poor creature," ſaid he, as he laid the letter down on the table before him; "ſhe can have nothing new to tell, though ſhe thinks me ignorant.—Cornelia, read that letter, and give me your opinion on the ſubject."

Cornelia did not wait to be twice requeſted, for ſhe had wondered at the ſilence and chagrin of Lorenzo the preceding day on a ſimilar occaſion, and little as ſhe knew of the world ſhe could not avoid ſome

unpleaſant

unpleaſant fears. The language and hints of Ippolita were altogether new to her, and ſhe begged Lorenzo to explain what ſhe could not underſtand.

He immediately related to her his former delufion, when ignorant of the character of this woman, and before he had viſited the valley of St Helma: by which means he prevented the miſchief that would undoubtedly have enſued, when the next day brought a letter to Cornelia herſelf, containing the groſſeſt falſehoods. As it was, Cornelia no ſooner received the letter than ſhe gave it into the hands of Lorenzo in the preſence of the meſſenger, ſaying with a ſmile, that having no correſpondents, he muſt take upon himſelf to anſwer this unknown friend.

Don Guzman and Ippolita, when they found that this ſcheme was fruſtrated, were for ſome time in ſuſpenſe, before they contrived means to renew their attack; but as the wicked are more active in ſuggeſting and executing their machinations,

than

than the good in repelling them: they had little fear to succeed by some more powerful means. Don Guzman resolved over various schemes, like Satan when he envied the happiness of our original parents, and it was not long before chance threw in his way an opportunity he immediately embraced.

Don Guzman contrived means to gain over Lorenzo's servant, who was a youth of very bad character; to this youth he committed a letter for Cornelia, in which he openly avowed his passion, declaring it was impossible he could survive her resentment.

Lorenzo detected his servant in the act of giving this letter to Cornelia, and as a reward for his services immediately turned him from the house.

Don Guzman, to whom he hastened without delay, rejoiced at the accident, and by the assistance of Ippolita sent, one after the other, half a dozen servants to inquire for the place, all of whom possessed some insufferable

ſemble defection—one was deaf; another blind of one eye; another heſitated in his ſpeech; and in ſhort each had ſome defect that was certain to procure their rejection, which wearied the patience of Lorenzo, who very readily engaged a decent dreſſed civil ſervant who preſented himſelf. This was Don Guzman himſelf, diſguiſed by the hands of Ippolita, and having the talent of mimicry, he would not have been eaſily detected, even by thoſe with whom he had lived in habits of intimacy.

Lorenzo received him without ſuſpicion, and his diligence and aſſiduity ſoon recommended him, particularly to Cornelia, whom he attended with officious care, and and ſought every occaſion to be near, without hazarding ſuſpicion. He poſſeſſed an excellent voice, and ſome ſkill on the guitar, upon which inſtrument he would perform, when he had an hour of leiſure, ſhunning the company of the female ſervants, and affecting an air of tender melan-

choly,

choly, which excited the curioſity of his lady.

He would frequently ſigh, when he could do ſo without being noticed by any other than herſelf, and he perceived that he gained faſt upon her good opinion. Without being conſcious of it herſelf, ſhe was leſs eager for large aſſemblies; and Lorenzo, charmed with her returning taſte for the country, left her many hours alone, that ſhe might find ſome novelty in his preſence.

It could not be long before Cornelia diſcovered the diſguiſe of the artful Don Guzman, who beſought her with the tendereſt accents, not to expoſe him, but permit him to enjoy the only pleaſure life had now for him, that of being near, and beholding her. Cornelia could not deny this requeſt, to a man who had ſtruck her lively fancy, by the gallantry of his perſon and addreſs; and who, while he poſſeſſed all the ſolidity of Lorenzo, was qualified by all that glitter, and thoſe ſuperficial attainments,

attainments, which bind in fetters the hearts of half the fair.

The virtue of Cornelia was ſcarce ſufficient protection againſt the devices of the dangerous Guzman. She was a novice in life, and he repreſented to her the maxims which Don Raphael and Lorenzo had given her, as ſuperannuated notions and illiberal opinions. Dangerous and ſophiſtical maxims from a flattering tongue, and an agreeable form, few women have power to withſtand. *None*, whoſe minds are not well inſtructed in the truths of religion, and on this ſubject Don Raphael had very ſlightly touched in his education of Cornelia, reſerving for a time of maturity thoſe opinions which ought to be ingrafted in the youthful mind, at the ſame period with every moral and ſocial duty.

Lorenzo had not the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of this illicit connection; he believed that Don Guzman was on a journey to a very diſtant province, and how could he ſurmiſe that one of the moſt airy noblemen

of Madrid was no other than the humble Anthony, who with ſo much zeal and attention performed the meaneſt offices of his ſtation? A moment's ſuſpicion would have detected him; but that ſupicion never aroſe, and he was in himſelf more happy than at any former period, as Cornelia ſeemed to have laid aſide her taſte for ſhew, and ſeldom expreſſed a wiſh to viſit Madrid.

Don Guzman, notwithſtanding his dexterity, ran frequent hazard of detection, when he was obliged to attend Lorenzo to the houſes of his intimate friends; and once, when Lorenzo paid a viſit to his father, to thank him for his former protection of Cornelia, he was obliged to feign himſelf ill. The prying eye of Count Aranda was what he moſt feared, and all his ſkill was employed to alter his countenance, and to keep at a ſufficient diſtance when obliged to attend in the preſence of that nobleman.

The

The novelty of this adventure began to wear out, and Don Guzman to tire of a ſervitude, which had not yet produced the ultimate ſucceſs of his ſchemes, when the Count, without having ſent previous notice of his ſituation, came one day with his lady in a boat down the river, and ſtopping at Lorenzo's houſe, invited him and Cornelia to join them in a ſhort excurſion upon the water, propoſing to dine in a rural ſtile beneath a pleaſant grove at ſome diſtance.

Cornelia was all alive at this propoſal, taking very few minutes to prepare herſelf; and Lorenzo, to add to the party, deſired his valet to take his guitar, that he might amuſe them by the way. Don Guzman would gladly have excuſed himſelf from this dangerous expedition, but he had no ſubterfuge to eſcape, and putting on the beſt air he could, he readily obeyed. He kept himſelf as much from the ſight of the Count as poſſible, chuſing a ſtation in the ſtern of the boat, where he performed a

variety of airs as they moved along the dimpling waves.

Cornelia had no apprehenſion of diſcovery, and ſo entirely had he blinded her underſtanding, that ſhe would not have ſcrupled to call him by his name had he not charged her on pain of loſing him for ever, to obſerve profound ſilence on the ſubject.

The varying landſcape appeared to move around them as they glided along upon the boſom of the tranſparent water. Spring had ſcattered over every tree and every ſhrub, the fleecy promiſe of the opening year, and ſoft perfume moved in the wind. They arrived ſome time after noon at the ſecluded ſpot the Count had ſelected for this rural entertainment, and landing, they entered the grove, whoſe over-hanging branches afforded a pleaſant and deſirable ſhade.

Don Guzman, after helping the boatmen to ſpread the repaſt upon the ſloping green, retreated to a little diſtance behind a buſh,

a buſh, as if from reſpect to the company, but in truth to avoid the Count, who had, more than once regarded him with the look of a man who endeavours to tax his memory with ſome diſtant recollection. The company being ſeated, Lorenzo expreſſed his admiration of the place, which ſo powerfuly recalled to his mind his adventures in the foreſt, that he declared he would frequently viſit it, that he might be reminded of thoſe days of misfortune, when doubt and uncertainty were the brighteſt of his proſpects.

Cornelia ſmiling reminded him of their firſt interview, and in her heart thought that if Don Guzman were permitted to join their company they ſhould be perfectly happy. They were agreeably amuſed to hear Don Guzman, after tuning his guitar, ſing the following words;

Sad was the parting,
When the tear ſtarting,
Trembled in drops on the cheek of my dear;
When the breaſt panting,
Felt words were wanting,
Murmuring, ſighing, adieu, in mine ear.

Glad was the meeting,
Tender the greeting;
Gazing, delighted, till tears filled the eye;
When at returning,
Each with love burning,
Taſted the rapture that ſpeaks in a ſigh.

"Upon my honour," exclaimed the Count, "your valet has an excellent taſte, one would almoſt think he was in love."

"I believe he is," cried Cornelia, with much ſimplicity; and the Count turning his eyes upon her, her confuſion immediately rouſed his ſuſpicion.

"He has not lived long in your family, I believe," ſaid the Count, "he ſeems ſo modeſt a youth, that he has no wiſh to be ſeen."

"He has been with us more than a month," replied Lorenzo, and if all ſervants

vants were as attentive, and obliging as Anthony, maſters would have no reaſon to complain."

"With whom did he live before you engaged him?" ſaid the Count.—"I think I have ſomewhere ſeen him."

"His figure, and agreeable addreſs, were the only recommendations I had," ſaid Lorenzo; "and my ſkill in phyſiognomy did not deceive me.—Come hither, Anthony," cried the Count, aloud, in a tone of voice that Don Guzman did not admire, much leſs the turn of his countenance when he ſtood before him.

"You have an excellent finger for the guitar," ſaid the Count, careleſſly,

"Pretty well, your Excellenza," replied Don Guzman, modeſtly bowing.

"I ſuppoſe," added the Count, "you have made it a long time your ſtudy.—Would it not turn to better account than your preſent line of life?"

"It would be more fatiguing," anſwered Don Guzman.

"With what family might you live before you entered your preſent ſituation," ſaid the Count, fixing his eyes upon him with increaſing ſuſpicion.

Don Guzman, in ſome perplexity, turned his looks to the ground, replying, that ſome time ſince he lived in the family of the Mendoza's, and had not been in ſervice ſince.

"I believe you indeed, Don Guzman," cried the Count, but immediately recollecting his raſhneſs, he remained ſilent.

Lorenzo ſcarce heard the name of Don Guzman pronounced, than the truth flaſhed upon him with the moſt horrid conviction. He leaped up without ſpeaking, and in the firſt motion of his fury he drew his ſword, and ran him through the body. Don Guzman fell, upon the ground, and the diſtracted Cornelia in a tranſport of deſpair ſtarted up, and threw herſelf upon him, rending the air with her cries.

"Abandoned, deceitful, and profligate hypocrite!" cried Lorenzo, "periſh on the

body

body of the wretch who has contaminated thy mind."

At theſe words he raiſed his arm with frenzy, and would certainly have deſtroyed his wretched victim, if the Count had not caught his arm, and by abſolute force dragged him to a diſtance.

"Cornelia cannot poſſibly be ſo criminal as appearances make her," cried he. "Liſten to reaſon, Lorenzo: let not the madneſs of a moment embitter all your future years."

"'Tis well," cried Lorenzo, in an agony of tempeſtuous paſſion. "You may talk coolly, but I have nothing to do but to die. Could I ſurvive this diſgrace? Never. If you are indeed my friend, releaſe your hold."

"Not till you ſhall have heard me," cried the Count. "I will pledge myſelf that Cornelia is not half ſo guilty as ſhe appears. This wretch has gained admittance to your houſe, by the only means poſſible,

but what proof have you that he has been further criminal?"

"O heavens!" cried Lorenzo, "what further proof do you require? Is ſhe not at this moment embracing him, while ſhe accuſes me as his aſſaſſin. Do not taunt me by forming excuſes."

The Count indeed was ſtruck dumb at the ſight. He remained bewildered in a thouſand fears, for he had never found himſelf ſo embarraſſed; and dreading the conſequences that might reſult from this outrage, he laboured to bring Lorenzo to reaſon. Stung to the ſoul by a diſcovery, which in one moment annihilated his repoſe, his proſpects, and his love for Cornelia, his brain ſeemed on fire with keenneſs of anguiſh, and throwing himſelf prone upon the ground, he groaned and ſighed, as if he was going to breath forth his exiſtence.

The Counteſs had at firſt remained motionleſs with horror, at the ſuddenneſs of this tragical ſcene, but ſeeing how much her aſſiſtance was requiſite, ſhe haſtened

to

to Cornelia, and removed her half dead from the body of Don Guzman, who, pale and bleeding faſt, lay extended upon the ground.

The Count perceived that no time was to be loſt, and with the aſſiſtance of the boatmen, carried the unfortunate gallant to the veſſel, giving them inſtructions to row with all ſpeed to Madrid, and convey him to the houſe of his father. There was no hopes that this accident could be concealed, and till the event ſhould be known, it was neceſſary, that Lorenzo ſhould retreat. But he could not prevail on that unhappy man, to take the ſmalleſt precautions for his own ſafety, as after what had happened, he wiſhed for nothing ſo much as death, to terminate his misfortunes.

"Ah," ſaid he, dolefully, "now do I feel what Don Raphael muſt have ſuffered. Now can I ſuppoſe the anguiſh of his mind and now he is amply revenged for all that he underwent through my means."

Cornelia

Cornelia could not behold Lorenzo extended upon the ground, without exclamations of deſpair, and ſhe was going to throw herſelf beſide him, had not the Count checked her, not a little aſtoniſhed at her actions, which he imputed to an effrontery and hypocriſy, of which ſhe was unconſcious.

"Good heavens, Cornelia," cried he, "what have you done? and what would you do? To what miſchiefs has your weakneſs expoſed us? and what injuries have you done to a man, who loved you ſo ardently?"

How was it poſſible, thought he, that Lorenzo ſhould ever be enamoured of a woman, whoſe ignorance approaches to folly. Too little knowledge is undoubtedly as great an introduction to vice as too much; and without religion, there is no foundation for virtue. He ſaw the neceſſity of Lorenzo's immediate concealment, but it was too hazardous to carry him to Madrid, and he ſeemed incapable, as well as indifferent

ferent to flight. Cornelia he determined to receive into his own houſe, that he might himſelf watch over her, till he could either place her as boarder in ſome convent, or reſtore her to Lorenzo.

He now regretted that he had ſo haſtily diſpatched the boat with Don Guzman, and finding that he could not prevail on Lorenzo to riſe from the earth; he left his own ſervant to guard him, while he led his wife and Cornelia to an inn which he remembered upon the Madrid road about half a league diſtant.

He returned in haſte, after having ſeen them lodged in ſafety, that he might, if poſſible, perſuade Lorenzo to reaſon, or force him to ſome place of greater ſecurity. On the road his ſervant met him, and informed him that ſome time after his departure, Lorenzo aroſe from the ground, in a ſullen diſpoſition, and gazing round like a man ſuddenly roufed from an alarming dream, he ran down to the water's edge.

"Hea-

"Heavens!" exclaimed the Count, "had you no more prudence. Where did he throw himſelf in?"

"He knew better," replied the ſervant, with a ſmile. "I thought that might have been his intention, and haſtened after him. He ſtood ſome time looking at the water, and then at the clouds; and to ſay the truth, he looked very piteous. At laſt a paſſage-boat came by; the maſter thinking, no doubt, he was waiting for him, tacked up to the ſhore. 'Tell your maſter,' ſaid he to me, 'that I am flying from every thing, and leave to him all I poſſeſs, that he may make proviſion for the deluded Cornelia.' He then, your Excellenza, ſprang into the boat, and ſitting down, covered his face with his hands, and away they rowed."

The Count was diſappointed at this accident, and leaving his ſervant in charge to wait for the boat, or to follow it in the next that went paſt, he returned to the inn. He there found Cornelia in the deepeſt

diſtreſs.

diſtreſs. Lady Agnes had expoſed to her eyes the exceſs of her weakneſs, and the conſequences ſhe ought herſelf to have foreſeen, which ſo much affected her, that ſhe was already extremely ill, intreating as a favour that ſhe might remain at the inn: for ſhe found it impoſſible to meet Lorenzo, who muſt think her unworthy of any further regard.

The Count was ſomewhat alarmed at this account, and hoping that this firſt error might entirely wean her mind from its natural love of vanity, he haſtened to her room, but he was confounded at beholding the extreme paleneſs of her features, as ſhe ſat in a chair facing the window, which was open to give her a little air. The colour which in the morning had brightened her cheeks, was now faded, and her eyes were become heavy and luſtreleſs.

"Heavens! Cornelia," cried the Count, "you are extremely ill: has no aſſiſtance been ſent for?"

"Sit

"Sit down, if you pleaſe," ſaid ſhe, waving her hand, "I ſhall not want a phyſician ſoon."

"I hope," ſaid he, gazing upon her, "you have not been doubly imprudent?"

"You may give it any name you pleaſe," replied ſhe. "I know not how you diſtinguiſh actions in this world, and I cannot too ſoon leave a place, where I am conſtantly guilty of error. Don Raphael gave me more inſtructions in the nature of drugs than of propriety, cuſtom, and decorum, and my knowledge of the one muſt make up for my deficiency in the other."

"Then my fears are true," ſaid the Count, much agitated. "You have committed the raſheſt action a chriſtian can be guilty of. You have dared to deſtroy yourſelf."

"And who would live to lead a life of ſhame?" anſwered ſhe. "Don Raphael always taught me that in ſuch a caſe it was better to die, and I have followed his advice: would to heaven I had never known

any

any other. Tell Lorenzo I lament the ſorrows he has experienced and ſtill will feel for my ſake; tell him that I love him with my lateſt memory, and though he may not believe it, tell him that though Don Guzman gained a ſhare of my affections, yet my heart never wavered in its duty, nor my inclinations in their deſires. I am ſatisfied in thus quitting the world for which I was not fitted, and Lorenzo will remember me dead, with more affection than he could have thought on me living."

"What ſentiments are theſe, and with how much coolneſs you pronounce them!" ſaid the Count in a mournful tone.

"And why not?" anſwered Cornelia, fixing her languid eyes upon him. "Don Raphael taught me to deſpiſe life; it was himſelf who pointed out to me in his cabinet, this invaluable drug, which is ſlow, but admits no antidote. I carry it always about me in a ſmall caſe of perfumes. I have not uſed the whole, and perhaps you

may

may have occaſion for ſuch a remedy. There is the reſt---I have taken enough."

The Count was more than ever amazed at the character of Cornelia; ſhe ſeemed to him to poſſeſs the ancient Roman heroiſm, but that ſhe ſhould preſerve this indifference for life, when it was momently flying away, exceeded every thing he had ever heard, and hoping that ſhe might be deceived in the power of this preparation, he ſtarted up and haſtened to call for medical aid; but before aſſiſtance could arrive, ſhe had ceaſed to live---pronouncing with her laſt breath the names of Lorenzo and Don Guzman.

"Was ever ſo ſingular a paſſion heard of before?" ſaid the Count, turning to his lady. "How is it poſſible that a woman ſhould regard two perſons at once, with ſo much affection as this poor deluded lady certainly did; and that without being conſcious of the impropriety? How many erroneous opinions does a wrong education engraft upon the human mind? and how

how dangerous is it to enter a different ſphere of action to that which has formed our habits and engaged our thoughts? Had this too lovely girl remained at a diſtance from the vain ſcenes of high life, and never quitted the ſhades of the foreſt, or at moſt the boundaries of a village, her heart would have been ſafe from temptation, and her days would have paſſed in peace."

"No, no," ſaid Lady Agnes, wiping the tears that fell from her eyes, and ſuppreſſing the grief that aroſe, for utterance. "You reaſon without reflection:---Was not Cornelia innocent and artleſs as a child? was ſhe not buried in a foreſt and ſecured by the ſtrong wall of a caſtle, and the ſtronger encompaſſments of ſuperſtition? but the art of man tempted her from her retreat. Was is not at the door of a cottage, in the humble guiſe of a peaſant, that Don Guzman firſt beheld her? Talk not, then, of the ſecurity of ſituation, when men, poſſeſſing power by nature to charm us, and

and riches to give ſtrength to their will, deſcend into the loweſt ſituation to diſcover beauty, innocence, and modeſty, that they may tranſmute them into deformity, vice, and uglineſs. Then in the plenipotence of their power, they exult and cry out, behold the glory of my actions! ---I have overcome where there was no means of defence---I have deceived the vigilance of unſuſpecting innocence, by the utterance of as many oaths, vows, and promiſes, as would have cauſed me to be hooted from ſociety, if the perſon to whom I had uſed them had been a man---and to pleaſe myſelf for an hour, I have deſtroyed a human being."

"Moſt true;" ſaid the Count, taking her hand. "But, my dear Lady Agnes, I muſt obſerve, that a woman educated in the principles of religion, would not be tempted, and could not be overcome: becauſe, though ſhe might liſten, though her heart might beat, yet ſhe would reflect that no ſophiſtry could ſet aſide the duties which

her

her heart avowed. But let us now leave this melancholy ſubject; I fear for your health, and Cornelia can receive no further benefit from our aſſiſtance."

The Counteſs turned to the corps of this unfortunate lady, and taking her hand, "Farewell," ſaid ſhe, "flower of innocence. It was thy utter ignorance of crime and the vices of men, that brought thee to this. The ſame ſentiments which you bore to Don Guzman, though miſplaced, were inſpired by your ſiſter Chriſtiana in the breaſt of Lorenzo, and I ſee no difference, but that you were a woman!"

She turned away unable to ſay more, and an hired carriage being arrived for them from Madrid, they returned thither with a heavy heart.

"This," ſaid the Counteſs, "is the evening of a day we had dedicated to pleaſure; and ſuch is the vanity of human hope."

On the following morning the Count diſpatched proper perſons to convey the body of Cornelia to Madrid, where it was interred

interred with decency and privacy. Meanwhile he waited with impatience the return of the ſervant he had ſent to follow Lorenzo on the track, and gather his intentions.

All Madrid rang with the tragical adventure, and the Count would have found the conſequences dangerouſly unpleaſant, if Don Guzman, who yet ſurvived, had not ſolemnly declared his innocence, and that the whole was owing to his inexcuſable ſpirit of intrigue, which he ſolemnly vowed to abandon, if he had the good fortune to recover.

On the third day the Count's ſervant returned, almoſt overcome with fatigue, and his maſter immediately ordered him into his preſence, impatient to learn tidings of his friend.

"Well, Pedro." ſaid he, "whither have you been? you have made a fine holiday of it."

"An holiday, does your Exceellenza call it?" replied Pedro. "Many ſuch holidays would

would ſend me to the grave. I have ſpent the world and all of money, and it was a lucky thing I had it to ſpend, or I might have begged my way back, and then I ſhould not have got to Madrid this half year."

"Well, Pedro," ſaid the Count, ſmiling, ſit down and let me have the ſimple facts, with as little of the marvellous as poſſible. You know I left you waiting for a boat—And ſo—"

"And ſo your Excellenza, I waited for a long time, till at laſt a boat came ſailing away from Madrid, and making ſigns to the maſter, and holding up to him a piece of money, he hauled aſhore, and took me in. We ſailed away with a fair wind and a powerful bench of oars, and I expected every moment to overtake maſter Lorenzo; but it was all in vain, for preſently comes me the boat back again that had taken him. I calls out to the ſailors, to know what they had done with my maſter, for it ſtruck me, and I had rather be ſtruck with ſuch a thought

thought than a cudgel, that would be the the beſt way to avoid ſuſpicion; and thinks I, they will not then deny him even if he ſhould pay them to be ſilent. Your maſter, is it, ſays the boatman. Well, if that is the caſe, you will find him at the ſign of the trumpet, if he is not gone away, but if he is, you will find him at ſome other place. Thank you for nothing ſays I, and away we ſailed."

"Be a little leſs prolix," ſaid the Count.

"I muſt be ſilent, your Excellenza, if I muſt tell it in fewer words than belong to it. If a man was to ſay *no*, how can he ſhorten the word."

"Proceed," ſaid the Count. "Now you are landed at ——."

"No, we did not land there; but a little on this ſide, and I had to walk there. I made a good many inquiries before I found him out, and then I might as well have known nothing, for he had taken horſe directly, and ſtruck back again towards Madrid.

drid. Ho, Ho, ſays I, ſecond thoughts are beſt. Give me a horſe; a ſail by water, and a ride by land is good for the ſtomach. I muſt have ſomething to eat, ſo I had ſome of the niceſt cheeſe and onions I ever eat in my life, and being refreſhed as a man may ſay, mounted and ſtretched away at a rare gallop, hardly ſtaying to bait. When about a league, I meets me a mule driver, who tells me he had ſeen my maſter, mounted on a white mule, in the high road to Segovia. I knew him, ſays he, for your maſter, the moment I ſaw him. How ſo, ſays I? Why, ſays he, he looked juſt as if he was going to be hanged. You I'm ſure, will never be drowned, ſays I: ſo you may go your way, and I will go mine, and I'll wager a piſtole, you can't gueſs which will be there firſt. There, where? ſays he. Why, to ſee my maſter hanged, ſays I, ſo I flogged away, and the next morning reached Segovia. I might as well have ſtayed at home for the matter of that, for nobody knew Cavalier Lorenzo, and I

made inquiry all that day, of every body I met and at every inn in the city; ſo I mounts me again, and turning my back on the cathedral dial, gallopped back to Madrid."

"Blockhead," cried the Count, "and is this all your information? you have ſpent three days, and learned nothing."

"Pardon me, your Excellenza, I have learned wiſdom; I have learnt that a man is better thanked who does nothing, than he who does every thing without ſucceſs."

The Count ſmiled and diſmiſſed him, though he was not very well pleaſed with having been ſo long held in ſuſpenſe to no purpoſe, and he very much doubted whether Pedro had not been impoſed upon in the firſt inſtance, it being very improbable, that Lorenzo would return on the road to Madrid, and leſs ſo, that he ſhould be within that city, and conceal himſelf from his friend.

Thus he was obliged to remain in doubt, as the danger of Don Guzman prevented him taking any public meaſures, and he hoped

hoped that he had only retired for a time, to give full latitude to his grief; and would not fail to ſend him notice, when time ſhould have ſoftened the keenneſs of his firſt deſpair.

CHAP. VII.

LORENZO, when he firſt left the grove, where he had ſo ſuddenly diſcovered his misfortunes and diſhonour, had no other plan than to fly to a diſtance, where he might never more behold Cornelia, or hear a name now ſo fearful to his ear. But as he ſat in the boat, indifferent to all external objects, his mind had time to reflect more coolly on the nature of the retreat he ſhould ſelect. One while he propoſed to bury himſelf in the profound and gloomy cloiſters of a convent, but he dreaded that prying curioſity which he knew poſſeſſed the breaſts of thoſe fathers, who have ſo little to amuſe them beyond the duties of their profeſſion.

Ah, thought he, could I follow the example of Don Raphael, I ſhould be content in the humbleſt ſituation, unknowing and unknown. Why may I not ſeek out ſome ſequeſtered ſpot, where I may lament my misfortunes in ſecret, and forget if poſſible, that I ever knew happier days. I will not indeed aſſume the vain name of a hermit, for I make no profeſſion of devotion or penitence; but I will ſeek for ſome ſilent ſhade like the valley of St. Helma, where I will bury myſelf in ſolitude, and forget that the world contains other beings than the beaſts of the foreſt, and the birds of the air.

The fanciful project ſerved to amuſe his mind, and when the boat finiſhed its voyage, he haſtened on ſhore, immediately left the town on foot, that he might ſink all traces of his route, not from apprehenſion of the conſequences of Don Guzman's death, but in the reſolution, that not even the Count ſhould know where he was, and interrupt his plan.

The ſeaſon of the year was ſuitable to his eccentric wanderings, and he took no regard to his route, taking care only to paſs at a diſtance from large towns, without inquiring their name, for their air of gaiety filled him with bitterneſs, and the ſmiles of others only reminded him of his own grief.

By day he rambled through the wildeſt paths, expoſed to the burning rays of the ſun, the wind, and the duſt, ſo that his countenance was ſcarcely to be known. By night he ſlept beneath ſome trees, or ſtretched himſelf upon the barren waſte. If he diſcovered a ſpot peculiarly romantic, and decked with all the charms of wild and luxuriant nature, he remained with intention to ſtay. But a few days diſguſted him with the ſameneſs of objects; and the miſery in his breaſt, gave no reſt to his feet. Still he fancied that ſome place he had not yet found, was to give him content, and he ſtarted forward with new hopes, in ſearch of this chimera; but

where

where ſhall the man find eaſe from the burden that is bound to his ſhoulders ?---the farther he proceeds, the leſs able he is to ſupport the weight that preſſes him down.

The brakes that Lorenzo had paſſed, the ſteeps that he had clambered, and the rocks that he had leaped, had nearly torn his cloaths to pieces, and he remained but thinly covered with the remnants of finery. His money was not yet expended, for what he purchaſed was the ſimpleſt food, and when he ventured to a cottage, the gentility of his manners, and the ſadneſs of his countenance, excited at once, reſpect and pity.

He ran no hazard of detection from the virtuous inhabitants of the plains and vallies, who each wiſhed to detain him, but it was ſeldom that he remained two nights in one place, nor would he accept from them the bounty they would freely have given.

Upwards of two months he continued to ramble he knew not whither; no place had power to charm him; and like thoſe

who conſtantly expect pleaſure to crown their attainments, he ſtill expected to find ſome ſpot that would meet his wiſhes, yet ſtill he continued to wander.

One evening he arrived at the banks of a brook, which was enamelled with flowers, and ſoftly gurgled over a bed of pebbles, inviting the mind by its ſoothing ſound to meditation. The ſpot was ſequeſtered by ſurrounding trees, ſtrongly reminding Lorenzo of the foreſt of St. Helma.

"Ah!" ſaid he, ſitting down on a little bank, and leaning his back againſt a birch tree. "It was ſuch an evening as this when I firſt beheld Cornelia in all the ſimplicity of youth and innocence. The ſun was declining behind mountains like thoſe before me; and the ſweet and balmy air, admixed with the ſtillneſs of nature, awakened the tender feelings of the mind to love. Ah me! what is that paſſion which ſteals imperceptibly into our hearts, aſſumes all the languiſhment of

ſmiles,

ſmiles, and ſoftens down the ſoul: but when oppoſed, acts with the tremendous frenzy of madneſs, and drags down miſery on our heads? What are all the reaſonings of philoſophers againſt that power, which, whether the object be worthy or not, bears down all barriers, and overleaps all bounds?

For ſome time he liſtened to the murmuring of the brook, or attended to the complaints of the nightingale and dove, till his reverie was interrupted by a ſlight ruſtling motion near him; and turning his head, he perceived a youth move ſlowly to the brink of the ſtream, where he ſat down taking his wallet from his ſhoulders which he carefully opened, firſt taking out a guitar, and then ſome fragments of proviſions. Theſe he began to eat with a very good appetite, quenching his thirſt in the limpid ſtream.

Lorenzo had no intention to interrupt him, and was not a little engaged by his agreeable figure, and the ſingular ſtyle of

his dreſs, which certainly was without ſuperfluity. His features Lorenzo had ſome ſlight recollection of having ſeen, for though browned by the ſun, they were wonderfully ſtriking and expreſſive.

This ſtranger, when he had finiſhed his repaſt, carefully replaced the fragments, and taking up his guitar began to play ſeveral little airs and flouriſhes; then joining his voice to the inſtrument, he ſung the following popular ballad.

AIR.

1.

'The heart that is gen'rous muſt ſurely be brave,
And the boſom that knows how to conquer and ſave,
Wants but love's gentle fire to inkindle the ſoul,
And exalt to perfection the worth of the whole.
Love throughout nature unites and combines,
Gives union to atoms, and mankind refines.

2.

The Arab who wanders the deſart's hot ſand,
Who preys upon man by the force of his hand,
Who ſnuffs up the gale that's impregnate with fire,
At love's gentle zephyr relaxes his ire:
Love throughout nature unites and combines,
Gives union to atoms, and mankind refines.

The

3.

The ſavage who treads through Canadian ſnow,
When nature is gelid, and cutting winds blow,
Wraps his bear-ſkin around him, and deep in his cot
Steals a kiſs from his miſtreſs, and praiſes his lot:
Love throughout nature unites and combines,
Gives union to atoms, and mankind refines.

Lorenzo heard a ſigh at the concluſion of this ballad. How fair, thought he, do we paint this paſſion! with what deluſion do we deceive our underſtanding and take pains to make ourſelves wretched! Perhaps this is ſome country ſhepherd, come hither to muſe upon his miſtreſs. What a pity the charm ſhould ever diſſolve; for though the fears of a lover are the ſharpeſt of torments, yet the pleaſures of the paſſion are indefinably excellent, ſo long as the mind is intoxicated with the ſweet delirium.

The ſolitary ſtranger having finiſhed his ſong, was not long before he began another, but he had no ſooner pronounced the words

"Blooming virgins ceaſe your pining,"

than

than Lorenzo remembered the wandering muſician which had ſo charmed him, and the Marquis's family, when they were flying from the devaſtation of war.—"I muſt be better acquainted with this young adventurer," ſaid he: "he is like myſelf, the child of misfortune."

Lorenzo ſtarted up, and advanced towards the youth; who beheld him with a mixture of ſurprize and fear, taking him for a robber; which the ſolitude of the place, his tattered, though once elegant, attire, his long rapier and unadorned muſtachos, not a little confirmed, but having nothing except his guitar to loſe he was not under much apprehenſion, and the words of Lorenzo ſoon diſpelled his fears.

"I am charmed," ſaid he, "with the entertainment I have received from your performance unſeen; I had little expectation of ſo much harmony in ſo deſolate a foreſt. Do you dwell in theſe woods?"

"No, Senor," replied the youth, "I wander about from place to place, and live

live by ſuch poor efforts as you have heard."

"It was not," replied Lorenzo, "taking a ſeat beſide him, "the firſt time I have liſtened to your ſkill. It is now more than two years ſince, yet I have not forgot the pleaſure I took in attending to your ſongs at a little village beneath the Pyrenean hills. My curioſity was then awakened in your favour, and I regretted that you departed ſo ſuddenly."

"I do not remember you," replied the youth.

"That is not a wonder," anſwered Lorenzo. "You were ſinging juſt now about love; did you ever experience the effects of that paſſion?"

The youth bluſhed deeply, and turning his eyes upon the ground could not ſuppreſs a ſigh.

"I ſcarce dare allow myſelf to believe that it is love which torments me," anſwered he. "For I never but once ſaw the princeſs, whoſe image is ſtill in my eyes."

"Unfor-

"Unfortunate that you are," ſaid Lorenzo, "could nothing leſs than a princeſs kindle the flame in your boſom? What could inſpire you with ſuch preſumption?"

"Ah! I know not," replied he; "it is now about three years ſince I beheld her, and beheld her but once; yet that was ſufficient to cauſe me to remember her for ever."

"Strange youth that thou art," ſaid Lorenzo: "Is this truth or a fiction?" Where does thy princeſs dwell? Tell me thy name, and I will be thy ambaſſador."

"My name is Sayavedra, and the princeſs of my affections lives in this foreſt. It was by chance that I paſſed through this place, when I met this peerleſs damſel tripping lightly along the path: I ſtood ſtill out of reſpect as ſhe approached: a ſmile played about her lovely mouth, and I could have fallen at her feet, and worſhipped her, ſo divine did ſhe appear in my eyes: I had almoſt loſt ſight of her

before

before I had courage to purſue her, and when I ran, in hopes of gaining another ſight of her ineffable face, and inimitable ſhape, I ſaw her enter a door through the wall of an old caſtle that ſtands in the centre of this wood, and though I waited till all my proviſions were ſpent I never ſaw her more. So long an abſence has not in the leaſt deſtroyed her image in my memory, and you now ſee me here in hopes to gain one ſingle glance at ſo celeſtial a maiden. If I can but do that I ſhall be happy, for my preſumption dare not aſpire to more."

"Ah!" cried Lorenzo, who had liſtened with mingled ſenſations of painful and pleaſing recollections: "how much does your little narrative intereſt me in your favour, by recalling a too near ſimiliarity in our fate. Happy youth, whoſe romanticity is ſatisfied with reflection, and whoſe love feeds upon the charms of imagination. The life that you have choſen has much to pleaſe, but then it is not always ſpring,

nor

nor do these trees always spread a shelter of impervious foliage."

"In the winter," replied Sayavedra, "I leave the fields and the villages, and take shelter in some city. I have been a vagrant from infancy, and am now a wanderer from habit. I have visited many countries. I have traversed Palestine, and trodden the summits of the Alps. From the Archipelago to the Baltic, from the Elbe to the Tagus I am perfectly acquainted. I am master of several dialects, but my guitar speaks a general tongue, and never fails to provide me bread."

"It is to you then a mine of wealth," replied Lorenzo. "Princes are at times without such a resource, and you ought not to despair of gaining the lady, since your revenue is without bounds. Besides, as you are ignorant of your birth you may lay claim to royalty."

"I have sufficient knowledge to assure me I have no such claim," answered Sayavedra. "I was stolen in infancy by a vabond

gabond Moor, and I have no other tokens of my birth than a picture which was ſuſpended round my neck, and which is ſufficient to make me believe that I am not ſprung from unworthy parents; yet it is to me matter of ſurprize that I can never diſcover the name or the family to whom this might belong, and I ſhould be tempted to think it only a fancy ornament, or the portrait of ſome perſon long ſince dead, did I not imagine there to be a diſtant likeneſs to myſelf in the general outline."

Sayavedra then unfolded his veſt, and preſented the portrait to Lorenzo, but the ſhades of night had gathered ſo faſt that he could not diſtinguiſh the features. Lorenzo inquired of him the name of the caſtle, and the foreſt; but theſe he did not remember, though he perfectly recollected the way, and was ready to conduct him immediately to the caſtle.

Lorenzo found himſelf intereſted in this adventure, admiring the fortunes of this

new

new friend, which reminded him ſo ſtrongly of his own, that in many inſtances they appeared the ſame.

Sayavedra ſecured his guitar in his wallet, then riſing with alacrity led the way.

The evening had cloſed at an early hour, for dark and heavy clouds laboured through the atmoſphere, and the winds were ſuſpended in a dead calm. A ſuffocating kind of vapour and heat ſeemed to foretel an approaching thunder-ſtorm, and faint flaſhes of luminous fluid broke the dark ſhadings of the clouds.

"We ſhall do well to get ſhelter in the caſtle," ſaid Lorenzo, "and if it is inhabited the ſtorm will be an excellent excuſe for the intruſion: Are you certain of your track in this intricate labyrinth?"

"The lightning will guide us," anſwered Sayavedra. "It already flaſhes on the tops of the hills. See now how it revels on the dark boſom of the cumbrous clouds."

Lorenzo

Lorenzo admired it in ſilence, and followed Sayavedra, who ſuddenly pauſing, took hold of his arm. "Cavalier," ſaid he, in a whiſper, "ſtay, I beg you; do you ſee any thing between the trees yonder, to our left?

"How ſhould I," anſwered Lorenzo, "the foreſt is as dark as midnight."

"Watch the next flaſh," anſwered the youth; and in a ſecond the ſubtle lightning darted, unreſtrained through every interſtice of the foliage, for a moment, illumining the deepeſt glen of the foreſt.

"I thought I perceived the grim figures of two men," ſaid Lorenzo; the one ſeemed ſitting on the ground, the other leaning upon a pike."

"They are, doubtleſs, robbers," anſwered Sayavedra; "we had better recede."

"You have nothing to loſe," replied Lorenzo, "and to me they would do a favour by taking my life; let us then follow

low our way without either ſeeking or ſhunning them."

The lightning now glanced in repeated and ſucceſſive flaſhes, without either rain or thunder, the body of the ſtorm being yet at a great diſtance, and moving extremely ſlow.

The ſhrill ſound of a bugle horn behind them, cauſed them to ſtart and look round, but all was impervious obſcurity, and they halted irreſolute. "There are certainly robbers in this foreſt," ſaid Lorenzo, in a low voice; "they will, however, have a very poor booty if they chance to meet us."

A ſudden cry of diſtreſs ſounded from the way they had heard the horn; and liſtening, they could diſtinguiſh through the ſilence of the night, the clamorous petition of a female voice for mercy.

"Now do I wiſh that I were armed," ſaid Sayavedra, "lend me your ſword; who can tell but this is the very lady I love, in the hands of theſe ruffians?"

"Take

"Take it," ſaid Lorenzo, unſheathing it. "You who love will have more energy to uſe it, than I, who have loved in vain, though your ſkill may be leſs then mine; I have yet a dagger behind in my doublet. Proceed---the lightning will ſerve for a torch bearer."

The cries of diſtreſs increaſed. The horn again ſounded, and its doleful notes echoed through the foreſt. In a few paces they perceived two ruffians dragging a female along, threatening to cut her throat, if ſhe did not ceaſe her ſcreams, but ſhe had not ſufficient command over her fears to have the power of ſilence.

Sayavedra quickly ruſhed upon them, commanding them immediately to relinquiſh the lady, at the ſame time he attacked them with generous impetuoſity. One of the ruffians flew at him, uttering a volley of oaths, while he defended himſelf briſkly, though without ſkill. Lorenzo advanced to the other, to force the lady from his graſp, but at the ſame moment he was ſeized

ſeized by two men behind, and his arms effectually ſecured. Then raiſing their pikes to the face of Sayavedra, whom they ſurrounded; they compelled him inſtantly to ſurrender, pinioning his arms behind him. To prevent the cries of the lady, they had the barbarity to cover her mouth with part of her dreſs, and having thus effectually ſecured their prey, they proceeded to ſearch for plunder.

Their anger was roufed at finding the poor booty the Cavaliers ſupplied; but the lady made them ample amends, and it was a queſtion, whether ſhe was more diſtreſſed at her ſituation, or at the loſs of a caſket of conſiderable value. What grieved Sayavedra, was the loſs of the portrait which they tore from his neck. Having finiſhed their plunder, they began to debate in what manner they would diſpoſe of the priſoners.

"Take my counſel," ſaid one of them, in a haſty rough voice, "we want no priſoners—

ſoners—dead people never tell tales.—You underſtand me.——"

"What, all three?" cried another, "No; by my faith, I ſee no neceſſity for it."

"What ſignifies that?" replied the firſt, "neceſſity or no, there will be ſecurity. No half meaſures for me."

"But the Captain has given us poſitive charge," ſaid the third, "never to murder, but when we can't avoid it."

"Poltroons," cried the firſt, "you have not the ſpirit of men, or you would not heſitate about trifles like theſe. There's Filelfo and I, when we are out on the ſcout, never ſtand about niceties. By the Pope's beard I ſwear, we bring in double the booty of any of you. We are men of buſineſs—blades of right Toledo ſtuff."

At the name of Filelfo, Lorenzo ſhuddered; no barbarity he knew was too infamous for this man, and he trembled to think that this lady and his new friend had fallen within the influence of ſuch power.

"I pro-

"I propoſe," ſaid the fourth, who overlooked the lady, "that we take them at once to the caſtle. We can there determine the buſineſs, and if we there decide to make them dumb, we can put them into the common hole, where I will engage they ſhall be ſafe enough."

This propoſal met their approbation, for it beginning now to rain, they were in haſte to ſeek ſhelter from the ſtorm which muttered its vengeance over their heads.

They immediately marched forward, and it was not long before the lightning diſcovered to the ſickened ſight of Lorenzo, the well known walls of the caſtle of St. Helma.

"Great God," cried he, internally, "how have I been unknowingly led to the fatal foreſt, whence the evils that have overwhelmed me, firſt had birth. But what myſtery is this? How has this caſtle become the den of murderers, and what is become of Don Raphael? Can it be, that he has turned his hand againſt all mankind in this outrageous manner; or has Count Pandolfo

Pandolfo dared to cut the thread of his life, that he might plunder his domains? Alas why am I compelled to call this man my father, who too probably in this tribunal of miſcreants, will preſide over the fate of his ſon? O moſt ſtrange, that it ſhould have been Cornelia, whom Sayavedra beheld, and ſo floridly deſcribed! His heart will receive a mortal ſtab, when he learns the hiſtory of her fate.

The gleaming lightning, flaſhed upon the lofty and dark turrets of this caſtle, elevated in majeſty, and canopied with clouds. The rain deſcended in a heavy ſhower, ſinging amongſt the trees, while the thunder, in aweful ſublimity, echoed deeply to the foundations of the trembling pile.

Sayavedra, though accuſtomed to a rambling life, had never met with an accident of danger equal to the preſent; and never having been accuſtomed to brave the raging paſſions of men, his heart died within him as they entered this terrific abode.

Within the court-yard they found a man upon watch, to whom they gave the word of the night, paſſing on to a gate, which Lorenzo had never before entered. Here they found a grim and pale looking wretch, watching beſide a lamp. He ſaluted them with a ſhrill ſhaking voice, demanding the fortune of the night.

"Pretty well, pretty well," cried they, "Theſe two ſtout looking fellows will make a decent figure," replied he. "The captain is gone very ſullen into his own room, ſomething has croſſed him, but you know he has his whims. By my troth though, theſe are pretty birds, and here is a ſparkling dame, her feathers betoken her breed."

"Her feathers are pretty well plucked, old father of ſin," replied one of them, "I fancy ſhe is a right bit of goods; but Jago here, who has no more gallantry in him than a Spaniſh cow, was juſt for gently cuting her throat."

"How far did you go to fetch her, comrade of mine," cried the heavy porter.

"Not

"Not far," replied he, "thanks to fortune, ſhe dropped into our hands, like a bird into a cat's mouth. There was ſhe riding along, mounted on a mule, but we ſoon ſtopped her curvetting."

"Well, well, it is all very well; you are come home in very good time, for we are all going to ſit down to be jolly. Such a ratling night without, wants a little cheer within---they are all in the old hall."

"Lead away then," cried they, "we ſhall not ſtay behind."

So ſtrange a metamorphoſis of the caſtle, filled Lorenzo with conſternation, but he could not conceive who was the author of ſo terrible an arrangement, and he feared that it might be Filelfo, who had with this hord of banditti, overcome both the Count and Don Raphael.

Theſe robbers, who were dreſſed in no uniform, appeared the very dregs of ſociety; all of them wore long rapiers and piſtols, and ſome of them had on the tarniſhed remains of the military habit. The

gothic hall, where formerly martial knights uſed to ſit, and relate their exploits of proweſs, and their deeds of glory, was now filled with furious wretches, who boaſted deeds of rapine and pillage.

A large brown antique table was covered with bacon, onions, cheeſe, bread, and wine, in promiſcuous confuſion. Round it, ſat near twenty of theſe men, eating with glutonous voracity, and the fierce Filelfo ſat umpire at one end of the table, caſting his regards around him, with the ſcowl of a demon. Deeply engaged in eating and drinking, they paid no attention to their priſoners, who were left to ſtand the ſpectators of this wild confuſion, their keepers being in haſte to join the feaſt.

Lorenzo had now leiſure to look around him, yet his eye conſtantly ſhrunk with horror from the deep malignity which the features of Filelfo exhibited unreſtrained. This ancient hall was lighted with a few low iron lamps, which were placed upon the

the table, and gleamed in the faces of the ferocious gang, diſplaying a variety of all that is dark, mean, cunning and deteſtable, in the human countenance.

Each man ſerved himſelf without order, and their ſupper had more the air of a ſcramble than a repaſt; one ſnatching from the other, what he was beginning to eat, and ſome were wrangling, and nearly fighting for a portion.

Over their heads, in dark obſcurity, waved the remnants of ſtandards, which had once wantoned in the field of battle, but were now loſt to the eye, except when the lightning flaſhed upon them, through the half broken windows, which rattled with the wind, and trembled at the pealing thunder.

The fury of the ſtorm was loud; but theſe wretches, in throwing aſide the laws of their country, had alſo laid aſide the laws of heaven; making it a ſubject of ridicule, and a topic of blaſphemy. The confuſion and uproar, which filled the hall, was ex-

treme, for each man would be heard, and no man would liſten; and the goblets they ſwallowed, rendered them ſtill more clamorous. Filelfo in vain, roared out for order, till he called upon Jago for a ſong, upon which the confuſion gradually ſubſided into murmurs, and Jago roared out the following ſong, loud enough to be heard above the ſtorm, and the frequent interruptions it was impoſſible to prevent:

I

Death or Freedom is our boaſt,
Unconfined by partial law;
We defy the ſervile hoſt,
Who would think our wills to awe.
War and plunder is our trade,
Noble ſouls love danger's air,
Seek it in the gloomy ſhade,
Or in the ſultry ſummer's glare.

Chorus. Then raiſe the goblet, raiſe it high,
Law and juſtice we defy;
Raiſe it high, and let it ſhine,
'Tis our God, for 'tis divine.

Sunk

II

Sunk in woods of darkeſt hue,
Rapine points the gen'rous way;
Fearleſs we our deeds purſue,
Deeds unheard, that ſhun the day.
Heat, and cold, and day, and night,
Howling tempeſts we defy,
Ruthleſs danger's our delight,
Thus we live, and thus we'll die.

Chorus. Then, &c.

This ſong was followed by burſts of applauſe, which ſhook the hall, and all of them riſing together, drank off a large goblet of wine each, holding the cup in their left hand, and flouriſhing their ſwords three times in the air; they appeared with all the frenzy of ancient Bacchants. When they had once more taken their places in ſome kind of order, Filelfo called out to know where were the priſoners, the ſcouting party had brought in, and where was the plunder.

"A very pretty picture this," ſaid he; "by my troth, I ſhould know the lady; bring her forward."

"It was not from the lady we took the picture," ſaid Jago. "Her's were pictures of a better complexion, or I have no taſte."

The lady lamenting her misfortunes, and loudly begging for mercy, was conducted towards the table, and the light for the firſt time meeting her face, Lorenzo ſtarted at beholding the infamous Ippolita.

"Rather worſe for the wear, by Jupiter," cried Filelfo, with a look of complacence around him, which only made his features more ſtrikingly ſhocking. "Still, however, ſhe may do for Captain Pandolfo. I ſhall ſurrender my claim very willingly."

"Captain Pandolfo," cried ſhe, with an hyſterical ſcream. "Is it Count Pandolfo? Where is my huſband?"

"Your huſband?" cried Jago, "Ho, Ho, if that be the caſe, I ſwear by the Pope's beard, we are in the wrong box. I adviſe that we ſend her ladyſhip packing; ſhe'll nd her way through the ſtorm."

"Peace, babbler," vociferated Filelfo, "bring up the ragged Cavalier. Ha! What,

What, Lorenzo! Thou here? By the ſhades of hell, thou art moſt welcome!"

Kindling fury blackened his features as he thus exclaimed, and darting from his ſeat, he ruſhed towards Lorenzo, to immolate him at his feet.

"What is all this," cried a voice behind, in an imperious tone. "Poltroons. Cowards. Do you cut each other's throats?"

"Begone," cried Filelfo, "this buſineſs is mine."

"I charge you on diſobedience to put up your ſword," cried the ſame perſon, ruſhing forward with the point of his own ſword, interpoſed before Lorenzo.—"At your peril to heſitate."

"By all that is—," cried the ferocious Filelfo, ſtammering with paſſion. "I will not be reſtrained.—Give me revenge!"

"Come on then," cried the Count, for it was he who had thus opportunely entered the hall, and now miſconſtrued theſe laſt words into a challenge of himſelf. "Come on," cried he, "thy treaſon

ſhall be puniſhed.—The demons of hell are ſubordinate."

Filelfo, blinded by his fury, ruſhed upon the Count, to reach Lorenzo, and immediately was ſtretched upon the floor, by the ſword of the captain.

"So periſh all traitors," cried Pandolfo: and the ſervile crew, who had been ſhouting death or freedom, filled the hall with clamours of applauſe.

Pandolfo now had leiſure to look round him. "Ah!" cried he, "who have we here? Whoſe picture is that on the table?"

"It belonged to a young Cavalier, as came acroſs our path to night," replied Jago, ſullenly; "and the tempeſt beginning to ſpit we brought him here."

Count Pandolfo gazed upon the picture, and then upon the three priſoners, with no little emotion. "Peſt of my exiſtence," cried he, turning to Ippolita, "am I to believe that there is an avenging juſtice which ever brings thy hideous form before

before me?----Infamous woman! I was black, but you made me ten times blacker."

Ippolita broke out into a taunting laugh. "Was it I," ſaid ſhe, "that cauſed you to live with Lady Almedia? Was it I that cauſed you to conceal the real ſon of that woman, by the Duke of Aragon? Was it I that cauſed you to abandon him at the age of manhood, and leave him ignorant of his birth? Do not think, Lorenzo," continued ſhe, turning to him, "that I make this diſcovery for your ſake; no, I deſpiſe you as much as I do this puſilanimous wretch before me; but it was this ſecret which the fond fool, Pandolfo, repoſed in me that tempted me to offer you my hand."

During this ſtrange ſcene the whole troop ſat loſt in ſtupid wonder, except thoſe who lay upon the floor or the benches, ſo overcome with liquor, that they could only rear their heads, and half open their ſwimming eyes in drowſy curioſity.

Lorenzo, whoſe hands had been releaſed by one of the men, when they learned that Ippolita was the wife of their captain, now advanced. "Count Pandolfo," ſaid he, in a firm tone of mind; "what I have this moment heard fills me with the greateſt doubt and amazement. It is ſome time ſince I knew myſelf to be the ſon of Lady Almedia, and believed that to you I owed my exiſtence. Say then if the words of Ippolita are true, and expect from me a ſecret of, perhaps, equal importance concerning yourſelf."

"What ſhe has ſaid is moſt true," replied Count Pandolfo. "You are aſſuredly the ſon of Don Raphael, Duke of Aragon, and Lady Almedia. It was that miſcreant Filelfo, who lays dying on the pavement, that murdered your nurſe, wounded you, and threw you both into the Tagus. I happened to be ſwimming by moon-light a little way down the ſtream, and the waves bore you to my arms. I ſnatched you from deſtruction, and carried you to the

the ſhore. Your dreſs told me you were of no mean birth, and I conveyed you to the cottage of a peaſant, to whom I gave you in truſt. Her name was Sylvia. I kept you there as my own ſon, conſidering you as a treaſure when my fortune, which was vaniſhing, ſhould be gone: and if at any time I have treated you with caprice and cruelty, remember that your father, Don Raphael, married my miſtreſs in vexation at our family, and I could hardly refrain at times revenging the inſult upon his ſon, ſo ſtrangely thrown into my power, and you will ſee that I have had great and ample vengeance on this haughty and imperious mortal. You were near three years old when my connection with Lady Almedia brought me a ſon whom I placed at nurſe, intending when age ſhould have deſtroyed the viſible difference of your years, to produce him in your place, and educate you in a cloiſter. Fortune baffled this deſign.—My own boy was ſtolen by a wandering gang of gypſies,

and

and then it was I ſhould have produced you to the world as heir to the dukedom of Aragon; but your father, then in this caſtle, was ſuppoſed by the world to be dead. Filelfo learnt your ſecret from dame Sylvia, and he has ſince told me that the tokens of your birth remain in an old cheſt in a cottage where he dwelt in this foreſt. His ignorance of your ſituation in life prevented his applying to the preſent Duke, but I have not left him in ignorance that you are yet alive, and this preſent ſituation, which he has given me in this caſtle, was merely to confine me to ſecreſy, though he affected to diſbelieve the whole of my aſſertions. But by what means did you come at this picture of your mother?"

"It is not mine," replied Lorenzo, awakening as it were from a reverie, which this diſcovery, and the duplicity of the Duke had produced. "It belongs to that youth, who I have no doubt is your ſon by the Lady Almedia. Come hither, Sayave-

dra,

dra, and take my place, for I have too long been in poſſeſſion of your rights."

Sayavedra timidly advanced, for what he had heard, he could ſcarce comprehend, and had no pleaſure to find himſelf ſon to a capt in of robbers.

"It is himſelf," cried Pandolfo, holding out his hand. "I perceive the little mole above his left eye. Come hither my ſon, and own if you can, a wretch like me for your father. But you are nobly deſcended, and from this day, you ſhall not have to bluſh Lorenzo, I have greatly injured you, but if it be neceſſary, I will atteſt your rights in any court of Spain. This, then was the ſecret you promiſed me, in return for delaring to you the truth."

"No," replied Lorenzo, caſting his eyes upon Ippolita: "it was a ſecret of a different nature; it was I, in the diſguiſe of a monk, which my ſituation compelled me to aſſume, who was preſſed into the ſervice by thoſe Cavaliers who forced you to take the hand of this woman. It was I who performed

performed the marriage ceremony, which my first education qualified me for, and I protest that this Lady Ippolita is not your wife. I can describe to you the chamber, and the words that were spoken during the ceremony, and I remember that Ippolita threw her arms round your neck when the service was finished."

"I thank you," cried Count Pandolfo; "I was at first incredulous; I am now satisfied. This deceitful harpy may now go and howl to the storm, or join the hags on the feared heath, who are dancing to the lightning's blaze."

"Wretch!—Impostor!—Villain!" repeated Ippolita, in the wildest fury, to Lorenzo; "you have been guilty of sacrilege, and I will inform the inquisition. Do you know that Cornelia is dead; that Don Guzman is dead, and you will be broken alive for a murderer? I will impeach you for mimicking the rights of the church. You shall find that though a woman, I can make a man to tremble. This moment I

set

ſet out: I will tumble the caſtle about the ears of you all!"

"Stop her," cried Count Pandolfo, as ſhe was making towards the door. "You are a priſoner here, Madam, and will not ſo ſoon eſcape. Though I am determined no longer to lead the troop, they ſhall not be betrayed.—They ſhall have time to ſeparate."

"No flinching; no whining;" cried ſeveral of them in murmurs. "You ſhall not quit us; what ſhould we do without you?"

"Put yourſelves under my direction," cried Ippolita, with daring fierceneſs: "I have a firmer ſoul and a more hardy ſpirit than that puſillanimous wretch:—I, woman as I am, will lead you in the face of danger, and ſhew you that ſex is the diſtinction of fools, when noble actions call to exertion."

"Your words are big," ſaid Jago, ſcowling from beneath his hanging brows, and ſpeaking in a deep ſlow tone. "But where

where was your heart of lion this night, when we ſeized you in the road to the foreſt? you were then mere woman. If our noble Captain will not ſtay with us, we muſt ſeek for other quarters: this qualm of his'n only wants a little wine to waſh it down. What ſay you, Captain, you won't be againſt a parting glaſs? Suppoſe you, and your ſon, and your ſon that is not, ſit down to our table here; and Madam too will not refuſe a bumper, or my gueſs belies me."

"Let it be ſo," ſaid the Count. "Come, my boy, and you Lorenzo, take your places; you may not be uſed to ſuch diſorder as this, but the caſtle affords no better."

Such of the company who had any ſoberneſs remaining, mixed themſelves round the table promiſcuouſly with thoſe who lay drunk, and the glaſs began again to circulate.

Lorenzo was ſilent, muſing upon the diſcovery of the night, which formed ſo

ſingular

ſingular a concatenation of events, that any one link to the chain having been wanting, would have deſtroyed the whole! but when he looked round him at the banditti that uſurped the hall, he feared to inquire of Count Pandolfo, what he had done with Don Raphael, and whether he yet lived.

The night was by this far advanced, but the ſtorm continued to howl, and the thunder every now and then muttered over the caſtle, whoſe darkeſt dungeons were not unſearched by the ſubtle lightning. The goblet had gone twice round, and noiſy mirth was beginning to riſe, when ſuddenly a bugle horn ſounded in haſte, and the report of a piſtol alarmed them. Every man who had ſtrength or ſenſe remaining ſeized a ſword or a dagger.

"Be firm, be cool and undiſmayed," cried the Count, his eye flaſhing with new luſtre. "I have engaged to leave you, but I will not leave you in the time of danger. Whatever be the cauſe of this alarm, remain here in ſilence and firmneſs, while I

go

go ſingly to inquire the meaning of this unuſual ſignal, which only the utmoſt danger can excuſe."

At theſe words, with a firm ſtep, he advanced towards the door, but was not more than half way acroſs the hall, when the door was burſt open with violence, and ſeveral ſoldiers of the holy brotherhood marched in with pikes at charge. Some of the robbers had ſtarted up with loud cries of vengeance, but the ſight of this tremendous array, ſunk them all into fear and ſilence: even the Count turned pale, ſtanding on the floor with his ſword point hanging down.

"Surrender," cried twenty voices at once; "you are all priſoners.---The firſt who dares ſtir or reſiſt, will be run through the body."

So many ſoldiers filed in, that they completely lined the hall, preſenting a breaſt-work of pikes to the diſmay of the robbers. A brilliant flame ſhone in at the door, and a number of ſervants bearing torches entered,

tered, crying out to the ſoldiers, "Stand clear, that his Excellenza the Duke of Aragon, and his noble ſon, Count Aranda, may enter."

"Is it ſo?" ſaid Lorenzo, caſting his eyes towards the door, "is my friend then come to witneſs this ſtrange diſcovery of my birth? but what to me is now the kindneſs of fortune, ſince Cornelia has been falſe and is dead?"

The Duke of Aragon and the Marquis by his ſide, both with their ſwords drawn, entered the hall; they turned their eyes round with a look of apprehenſion, and perceiving the Count in his uncouth habit of a robber, the Duke cried out, "Count Pandolfo, is it thus you execute the truſt repoſed in you? I had a better opinion of your promiſes than I find they merited. You have converted my caſtle into a den for banditti, and your outrages have reached the ears of public juſtice. You imagined yourſelf ſecure, but you were expoſed, and I came myſelf to witneſs what

I could not credit. What account do you give of your charge? How is Don Raphael?"

"He is well," cried Count Pandolfo, abaſhed.

The Duke moved forward to take a ſeat, and the Count Aranda paſſing near Lorenzo, the latter ſeized him by the arm. The Count fearing ſome danger, turned briſkly round to defend himſelf, nor did the voice of Lorenzo cauſe him leſs ſurprize.

"Is it poſſible!" cried he, "Lorenzo in this place, and in this company; and in ſuch a garb! Give me leave to ſay, I know not what excuſe you can offer for becoming the companion of ſuch men as I ſee around me."

"Softly," replied Lorenzo, ſighing, "my tattered garments belie me. Know you not the fragments of a dreſs, in which I once was happy? The thorns of the waſte, and the boughs of the foreſt have torn me thus. It is not ſix hours ſince I was taken pri-

priſoner, as I wandered by chance with this youth through the foreſt, which I knew not then was the fatal foreſt of St. Helma."

"You will excuſe my ſuſpicions," ſaid the Count; "I have news to tell you, that will give you pleaſure. Don Guzman has recovered, and you may again appear."

Lorenzo ſighed.

"My Lord Duke," ſaid Count Aranda, "give me leave to introduce to you, my friend, whom I have juſt diſcovered, in a ſhattered plight---Cavalier Lorenzo."

"Under that diſguiſe," ſaid Pandolfo, taking courage, "Give me leave to introduce to your Excellenza, this your relation, the heir of Aragon, and the ſon of his highneſs, Don Raphael."

The Duke appeared not a little diſturbed, looking upon Lorenzo with marks of diſtruſt and diſpleaſure.

"How," cried he, "dare you abuſe my credulity by ſuch a tale? I know well that my nephew was drowned."

"We

We have proof more than ſufficient," replied the Count, "and you know it. I can bring before you a chain of events from his infancy, and if you would not be publicly expoſed, and publicly ſtripped of the titles and ſituations you now hold, you will upon this ſpot acknowledge your nephew, and the heir of Aragon. In an old cheſt, at the cottage of Filelfo, are at this moment, the cloaths in which the little Lorenzo was dreſſed, when thrown into the river; they were preſerved by dame Sylvia, when ſhe removed thither. Upon his arm is ſtill the mark of the wound he received, and in his cloaths are an anſwering rent."

"Stop," cried the Duke in confuſion, and throwing himſelf into the arms of Lorenzo; "there requires not ſo many particulars to obtain juſtice from me, when I am convinced of its due. I did believe that I could trace ſome family reſemblance; but how could I ſuſpect that my nephew ſhould yet live after ſo many years loſs?"

"My Lord Duke," replied Lorenzo, "it is natural that you ſhould regard me with a jealous eye, but it is becauſe you do not know me. On this ſpot, and before theſe witneſſes, I reſign to you the poſſeſſion of all honors and titles that belong to me, nor will I publicly claim them, till acknowledged as your heir, which may heaven for a long time avert! I muſt indeed claim from you a competency, the poſſeſſions I have received from Lady Almedia, belonging now to this young man, as ſon to Count Pandolfo."

At this moment they were thrown into confuſion, by the ſudden illneſs of Count Pandolfo, who turning pale and red alternately, ſunk into the arms of one of the ſoldiers, on which Ippolita clapped her hands, and broke out into an hyſterical laugh; but immediately turned pale, and drooped her head.

"What is the meaning of this myſtery?" cried the Duke. "Can any man inform

us of the truth—ſpeak, and he ſhall be pardoned."

"I can," ſaid a pale thin figure of a man, with deep hollow eyes, and ghaſtly viſage. "I will explain it, if your Excellenza will pledge your word to pardon me."

"Lead him away—rack him, till he diſcovers what he knows;" cried the Duke. "I make no bargains with robbers."

"Pardon me," interrupted Count Aranda, "you have already given your word—you cannot retract. Speak what you know,—I will engage your ſafety."

"Donna Ippolita," ſaid he, "has poiſoned the Count.—I ſaw her take from her boſom a phial, which ſhe emptied into a goblet of wine. She knew not that my eye was upon her. She beckoned me to her: 'Carry this,' ſaid ſhe, 'to thy Captain, and bring his cup to me, that I may pledge him, for though he hates me, I love him ſtill.' I had no objection to give the Captain this quieter. I feared he would betray us if he left our gang. But, thought I, 'tis a pity

ſo

ſo loving a couple ſhould part. So as this woman deſired to pledge the Captain, I dextrouſly mixed the liquor—The Count and the lady both had their ſhare."

Ippolita at theſe words uttered a loud ſcream that vibrated through the hall, and cloſing her eyes, ſhe ſunk back upon the pavement; her face, in a few moments, became diſcoloured, and her ſoul left its once too beautiful manſion, with yells of deſpair, that ſtruck diſmay even into the hearts of the moſt obdurate. So dreadfully ſtrong were the effects of this poiſon which had been ſo long before it operated, that in leſs than five minutes after Count Pandolfo became ſpeechleſs, he breathed his laſt with violent convulſions.

"Let us away," cried the Duke, filled with horror at ſcenes to which he had never been accuſtomed. "Take every one of theſe men priſoners to Leon: the moſt atrocious ſhall be hanged, and the reſt ſent to the gallies for life. This miſcreant ſhall not eſcape, becauſe he has betrayed

his own ſecrét. My word had no alluſion to a crime I did not ſuſpect. It was only the puniſhment due to him as a robber that I alluded to. It were an act of injuſtice towards all ſociety, to turn looſe a wild beaſt like this amongſt them."

Lorenzo ſmiled in his own mind at the deep policy of the Duke, whoſe character he had before remarked, yet he could not in this inſtance conſider it an act of injuſtice.

"We muſt trouble you," ſaid the Duke to Lorenzo, "to lead us to the moſt habitable part of the caſtle. The night is too late at preſent to viſit Don Raphael."

Lorenzo, in ſilence, led the way, two torch bearers lighting them to that part of the caſtle which Don Raphael had fitted up: a profound ſilence every where preceding them: they found it diſmantled of its ornaments; the books were torn up to kindle fires; and ſeveral cheſts, and bags of plunder, were heaped in confuſion amidſt a promiſcuous quantity of arms.

"This

"This looks like the den of a robber," obſerved the Count. "It was here, no doubt, Pandolfo brooded over his expeditions, and ſtimulated his avarice by the view of what he had already acquired."

The whole company ſeated themſelves, the ſervants lighted two lamps, and Lorenzo directing them to look for wine, and other refreſhments, they ſoon found abundance, though not in equal quality to the ſtores of Don Raphael, which had been quickly exhauſted.

The greateſt part of the night was ſpent in different recitals, and mutual explanations, to the aſtoniſhment of Sayavedra, who felt very little ſatisfaction in the change of his fortune when he found that the lady of his fancy no longer lived.

"Our ſudden appearance this night would ſurprize," ſaid Count Aranda. "The whole of the proceedings of Count Pandolfo, and theſe men, were betrayed to us by Nugnez, the ſmuggler, who had no other means to revenge himſelf on Filelfo.

It was under his direction the whole of this enterprize was conducted, and he now remains without in the foreſt with a party of reſerve, for the character of theſe robbers has in two months filled this part of the country with diſmay, and we conſidered it a folly to leave any thing to chance."

On the following morning, as ſoon as it was well day, they haſtened to ſeek the chamber of Don Raphael, which the death of Count Pandolfo rendered uncertain to be found. The light of day partially broke through the ſolemn obſcurity of the paſſages and chambers, giving ſo dreary and deſolate an appearance to the whole pile of building, that the Duke, contraſting it with the elegances he was accuſtomed to ſee round him, would willingly have ſhrunk from the reſearch, fearing that ſome chamber might retain a robber, who had eſcaped the captivity of his comrades.

As they paſſed along, Lorenzo obſerved a door with a key remaining in the lock, and immediately opened it, ſtarting back

with

with horror at perceiving a human body upon the floor. The Duke caſt his eye into the chamber, and was hurrying away in conſternation, when Lorenzo recollecting himſelf, begged him to return.

"I perceive," ſaid he, "that this is the body of dame Sylvia, which has lain, no doubt, on the ſpot where ſhe died, no one taking the trouble to bury her. She is withered and dry, and this, my friend Aranda, muſt have been the corpſe I was led to believe was Cornelia's, on the night when I was brought hither a priſoner."

The Duke haſtened them away. "Good heavens! what horrors this place affords!" ſaid he; "what a ſtrange and barbarous taſte muſt my brother have had for all that is terrible! How could he paſs years in theſe gothic chambers, fit only for owls and banditti?"

"Liſten," ſaid Sayavedra; "I thought that I heard the rattling of a chain. Don Raphael is, doubtleſs, within yon door."

The Duke turned pale, and remained ſilent.

"It does not ſeem to me," ſaid the Count, "that the ſound proceeds from within that apartment; it rather comes from a diſtant part of the caſtle."

"We are going to alarm ourſelves," replied Lorenzo, ſmiling. "When I firſt came to this foreſt, I was warned to beware of a ſpirit that wandered about this caſtle in chains. Did your Excellenza ever hear of any perſon being confined till extreme old age, and afterwards murdered?"

"Never," replied the Duke, with evident diſmay, "is ſuch a ſtrange report current in this country?"

The company were alarmed with apprehenſions for their own ſafety, as the ſtrange ſound they heard evidently advanced. In a few minutes a human form, clad in a garb of coarſe ſilk, which hung down to the ground, entered the farther end of the gallery. His hands were faſtened by a chain,

hain, and his ſteps were meaſured and ad: his beard was long, and his eyes bent upon the ground. At every motion he nade, the chain emited a rattling noiſe, but his eyes were never raiſed to regard any thing around him.

The whole company remained ſilent, liſtening to the words that he uttered to himſelf.

"Is it then true," ſaid he, "that I am nothing but a beaſt? Has my immortal ſpirit forſaken me, never more to return? yes; I am become an animal---a mere machine---a philoſophical man---fit only to herd with the beaſts of the field. Yet my teeth are not made to crop the herbage as the ſheep; nor to immolate the lamb like the wolf. I have no claws, like a tiger, or wings like the eagle of the mountains.--- How then, beaſt as I am, am I to provide for my ſuſtenance? It is true I do not want much. About ten or twelve thouſand acres of ſpontaneous produce is about ſufficient food, for I cannot cultivate the

earth, ſince providence has deprived me of a ſoul. Yes, I know I am a beaſt, and only a beaſt: were I more I ſhould be capable of *improving myſelf*. Matter may be improved, beaſts may be improved, but it is only intelligence that can improve itſelf. All the wiſdom in the univerſe cannot now teach me to combine two ideas, and draw an inference. As I was yeſterday I am to day, and ſhall be ſo for ever. I am now like all other beaſts, the ſame through a thouſand generations. Matter juſt above vegetation. Yes, it muſt be ſo. But where is my ſoul? Ah! I thank thee, gracious Creator! that to which thou gaveſt being thou wilt not annihilate, though thou mayeſt change. This ſpark of immortality is free—now will I exult in my freedom.—Now do I wander over the hills —now do I contemplate the wonders of thy creation. —Thou haſt parted this my ſoul from my body, and permitted me to enjoy the boundleſs regions of our hemiſphere, while

nile my wretched body lays at this mo-
ent in the caſtle of St. Helma!"

"How ſtrange a being, and of how com-
ound a nature is man!" ſaid Lorenzo;
behold here, Don Raphael! Remark the
ſtinctions between our exiſtence, and re-
ard man as a link between angels and
nimals. He poſſeſſes the celeſtial and
nmortal ſpirit of the one, with all the
ualifications which are beſtowed on whole
ices of animals."

Don Raphael had approached ſufficiently
ear to diſtinguiſh the company, and attend
o this diſcourſe. "Why," ſaid he, mildly,
'are you come to witneſs my humilia-
ion? Lorenzo, though I have loſt my
'oul, and am become a mere animal, I re-
nember, and forgive you. Animals have
nemory.—Which road did you come?"

"We came from Leon," anſwered the
Duke.

"Ah! then you could not meet my ſpi-
rit, for I was all laſt night ſitting upon the
heath, watching the lightning, that it might
do

do no miſchief. I expected that the caſtle of St. Helma would have been blown down, and the mortal part of me cruſhed in the ruins, but I found it ſafe this morning. See how Count Pandolfo has chained me ſince I became a beaſt; but I was ſufficiently tame, and had no inclination to expoſe my fallen ſtate before man."

"My dear brother," ſaid the Duke, "you are no longer to remain in this ſituation, we are come to free you and pardon you. We have diſcovered that your legitimate ſon eſcaped from the waves, and is no other than Lorenzo before you."

"And is this poſitively and peremptorily true?" ſaid Don Raphael, ſeizing Lorenzo; "when I firſt ſaw you, I found a ſtrong inclination to you, but I trembled for your fidelity to me. You now ſee the lion tamed, and if it be true, which my brother aſſures me, that I have received a pardon, my ſoul will then again return to my body, and I will ſpend the reſt of my days in penitence and prayer, and be uninterrupted

terrupted in thoſe divine contemplations, which ſo often delight me on the high mountains."

The whole company were grieved and aſtoniſhed at the words they heard, which diſplayed the human underſtanding in ruins; and endeavouring in all their diſcourſes to confirm him in the idea, that he was again like other men, they avoided particulars, which might too nearly touch the ſubject of his derangement.

They retired together to the library, where they breakfaſted; after which, Lorenzo indulged himſelf in the melancholy pleaſure of wandering through the apartments of the caſtle, while his friends examined into its wealth.

The Duke requeſted that his ſon-in-law would negotiate between him and Lorenzo, by inquiring his views, and what part of the family eſtates he intended to claim. To this intimation, Lorenzo replied, "I want neither power, wealth, nor fame. I have no motive to appear in the world ſuperior

perior to what I have been, and I confeſs that I ſhould like to reſide in this caſtle, upon an eſtabliſhment, ſuch as my rank demands. I ſhould live here in all the retirement which my misfortunes render agreeable, and when weary of ſolitude, I can fly to the neighbouring city. Habit has in ſome meaſure familiarized me to theſe woods, where I have been engaged in ſo many adventures; that thought is always returning them freſh upon me. Here will I lament the wretched fate of my Cornelia, for her innocence I cannot doubt, as her ſoul was unconſcious of falſehood."

This was exactly what the Duke would have wiſhed. It would leave him in tranquil poſſeſſion of his preſent honors, and he immediately coincided in the plan, entering more at large into the economy of ſuch an eſtabliſhment.

He was obliged the ſame day to return to Leon, leaving to Lorenzo all thoſe repairs and improvements, which his fancy began already to deſign

At Leon, a public acknowledgment was made of the rights and claims of Lorenzo, and a number of workmen diſpatched to reſtore the caſtle to its ancient ſplendour.

Lorenzo appointed Nugnez as his ſteward, and attended his friend the Count, to the city, where Don Raphael immediately entered the retirement of an auſtere order of monks, and the Duke taking Sayavedra under his protection, haſtened to Madrid; for though policy obliged him to politeneſs, he could not look upon Lorenzo with perfect ſatisfaction.

The Count remained yet a few days, to enjoy the company of his friend, endeavouring to inſpire him with a taſte for ſociety. As they paſſed by the church of St. Stephen, they were tempted to enter, by ſeeing many others haſtening the ſame way. They found the high altar decorated as on a day of feſtival, and a very numerous aſſembly, who expreſſed their impatience by whiſpers, while they waited the commencement of the ceremony.

Lorenzo

Lorenzo and his friend contrived to get as near as poſſible to the gates which divided the ſanctuary, where they inquired of one of the ſpectators, what was the occaſion of this unuſual aſſembly.

"It is," replied the Cavalier whom they had addreſſed, "the admiſſion of a nun to her firſt noviciate. She is a moſt lovely creature, and one would almoſt wiſh to go to heaven, if it were only for the ſake of her company."

Lorenzo ſmiled at this eulogium. My own folly, thought he, deprived me of a lady who might have merited ſo much praiſe; but is there a ſecond in the world of whom this can be ſaid with truth?

The commencement of the ceremonial awakened all his attention. The holy ſiſters entered and took their places, their long black veils concealing their features, and he ſtrained his fancy to recollect the ſhape, the air, and the figure of Chriſtiana in the candidate for reception. He clung to the rails in his earneſtneſs to gain a

glance

glance of her features, and as the ceremony proceeded, his anxiety became extreme, as he perſuaded himſelf it could be no other than Chriſtiana.

"Good God!" cried he, in a low voice; "ſhall I then loſe her without even ſeeing her face?"

The people around him were attracted by his evident emotion, and the eyes of the ſpectators, as well as the monks, turned upon him.

The Count endeavoured to check his emotions, but his ſuſpenſe was ſo extreme, that he paid no attention to his words, demanding of ſeveral people round him, loud enough to be heard, what was the name of the novice?

This indecent behaviour cauſed no little confuſion, and one of the prieſts, who was only a ſpectator, advanced to the grating to command him to reſtrain his tranſports or retire.

"Tell me, holy father; I beſeech you to tell me," ſaid Lorenzo, "what is the name

name of the lady who is going to take upon her the vows: tell me only whether it is my dear ſiſter."

"Reſt content;" replied the monk, "ſhe has no brothers but thoſe of the kingdom of heaven.—She never had any;—Her name is Mirandula."

"Chriſtiana de Mirandula!" exclaimed Lorenzo, claſping his hands: "O heavens! I cannot bear it—It is too much."

At theſe words his eyes cloſed, and he would have fallen upon the pavement, had not the Count and one or two others ſupported him, conveying him from the church to his lodgings; nor was it without medical aſſiſtance that he recovered, but though his ſenſes returned, a ſlow fever ſeized upon his nerves, and the phyſician apprehended the greateſt danger.

The Count was extremely intereſted in this untoward event. The retreat of Chriſtiana was a ſecret even to him: for when that forſaken and orphan lady ſaw that all her hopes of gaining Lorenzo's affec-

affections were abſolutely done away, that her friends were deſcended to the ſilent grave, and ſhe alone, left to linger in the world, there appeared to her no choice remaining; and the life of a nun poſſeſſed all the requiſites that could incline her mind to eternity, and preſerve her unpoluted, amidſt ſurrounding evils. Yet did ſhe not precipitate her reception, till ſhe had conceived an eſteem for the ſiſters of the houſe, and in ſome meaſure taken up a taſte for their forms.

The Count recalled to mind that theſe firſt engagements were more a tie upon honour than abſolutely irrecoverable; though it was not to be expected that ſhe would now recede, when character and pious reſolutions would ſtrengthen her perſeverance. He determined, however, as a common friend, between thoſe whom he wiſhed nearer united, to requeſt a ſight of her in the parlour, though he concealed his viſit from Lorenzo, that a diſappointment might not ſo ſoon reach him.

At

At his firſt requeſt, the porteress returned him very unſatisfactory anſwers, poſitively refuſing to bear his meſſage, alledging that ſhe had ſtrict orders that no one ſhould be admitted to her. "A fine piece of work we had of it yeſterday," ſaid ſhe; "there was her pretended brother (for we all know ſiſter Chriſtiana never had a brother) ſwooning away in the church, and diſcompoſing the whole company; and then ſiſter Chriſtiana, to be ſure, muſt follow his example, and ſo the ceremony muſt be poſtponed. Brother, indeed; he is no more her brother than he is mine:—Some gallant though, I ſuppoſe; and give me leave to ſay, it is very unbecoming of a perſon ſo much like a gentleman as you, to come and make bad worſe."

"You very much miſtake me," replied the Count, mildly. "If you knew that you were now ſpeaking to a Grandee, and that the brother of Chriſtiana is Duke of Aragon, you would be a little more kind."

"Bleſs

"Bleſs me," cried the portereſs, croſſing herſelf, and dropping a very low courteſy. "I hope your highneſs will not think any thing of it, for I was never impolite in my life. But only to think ——."

"Well, Well," ſaid the Count, "you will not now reject my meſſage; I will entruſt you with a ſecret. It is the brother-in-law of the lady, who is my friend. Tell her ——"

"Yes, Yes," cried the portereſs, tripping away. "I'll tell her ——"

"Beg of her——" cried the Count. "Never fear," returned the portereſs, and was gone without waiting for any further inſtructions.

The Count reflected that nothing could be a more fortunate omen than this agitation of Chriſtiana which ſuſpended the ceremony, it being a teſtimony ſtronger than words, that Lorenzo had yet more ſhare in her affections than perhaps ſhe herſelf had believed.

The

The portereſs returned and informed the Count, that Chriſtiana thanked him for his kindneſs, but intreated him to excuſe her appearance, as ſhe was far from well, and that ſhe had not the pleaſure of knowing the Duke of Aragon, or ever remembered having ſeen him.

"My good friend," replied the Count, "if you had waited a moment, you would have been better inſtructed. Tell her, if you pleaſe, that it is Lorenzo de Ferara who has recovered his patrimony, and is heir to the title I have mentioned; that her ſiſter Cornelia is dead; and he has many important things to ſay to her. Tell her, that as ſhe is my ward, I cannot leave Leon without ſeeing her."

The portereſs again tripped away with the meſſage, and returned in a few minutes. "I know not," ſaid ſhe, "what you have done in ſending me with your ſpeeches. Siſter Chriſtiana is gone crazy, I believe. 'Go,' ſaid ſhe to me, 'go down to the Count, tell him I ſhall be well to-

mor-

morrow, and then I will ſee him, but don't ſay a word of the pleaſure I have expreſſed in this news that you bring me. Gracious heaven, if—But I will not flatter my folly.' I promiſed to keep her ſecret, which I am well qualified to do."

The Count ſmiled, and as a recompence for her trouble, forced her to accept a ring, which he begged her to wear as a token of friendſhip. He haſtened thence to Lorenzo, reflecting by the way, whether he ſhould mention the ſubject of his viſit, ſince it promiſed better than he had dared to expect. The joy upon his features led Lorenzo immediately to inquire what good news he had heard from Madrid.

"None," replied the Count, "but I have learnt that your particular behaviour yeſterday, in the church, created ſo much confuſion, that the ceremony was poſtponed. What think you of this accident? It is a certainty, that ſhe ſtill retains much affection for you in her heart; but my dear friend, be careful that you are not deceiving yourſelf."

"No," replied Lorenzo, "I was perfectly convinced of her merit, it was paſſion alone, that before blinded me to her excellencies, and rather prevented my accepting the invaluable gift of her heart. After Cornelia, ſhe was always moſt dear to me. Her company always charmed, and her converſation was always pleaſing—then the mildneſs of her diſpoſition; the heavenly benignity of her countenance; the ſweetneſs of her expreſſion, and the piety of her thoughts, ſeemed to raiſe her above her ſex, and the eſteem with which I beheld her, was tempered with reſpect."

"All this, and more might be ſaid," replied the Count. "You know with what ſentiments ſhe inſpired me on my firſt interview, and there was nothing I would not have done to ſerve her. But can you think ſhe will accept you after the many ſlights ſhe has received? Has ſhe not ſuffered more from you, than the pride of moſt women would ever forgive, and if ſhe can forgive you, you may ſafely rely that all Spain will ſcarce produce her equal."

"My dear friend," ſaid Lorenzo, "do not overwhelm me with difficulties. I feel them too much, and certainly ſhall not ſurvive her rejection."

On the following day, the Count haſtened to the convent as early as propriety would permit, and after waiting a few minutes, Chriſtiana came to the gate; her agitation at firſt ſeeing the Count was great, but ſhe turned her eyes round, with a look of inquiry, expreſſive of diſappointment at his being alone. She was extremely pale, though the emotion of her ſpirits gave animation to her frame.

Count Aranda began with the tendereſt inquiries after her health; and then adverting to his friend, "My dear ward," ſaid he, "you muſt not be ſurprized that I am alone, Lorenzo is too unwell to leave his room, and has too little hope to----"

"Ah!" cried ſhe, with a motion of her hand, "do not let me be once more led into error.--Is my ſiſter Cornelia dead?"

"She is," replied the Count, "and Lorenzo is impatient to caſt himſelf at your feet, to fulfil thoſe engagements he pretends to have made to you, and which your father witneſſed."

Chriſtiana covered her face with her hand, while a few tears forced themſelves from her eyes. They were the overflowings of a joy ſhe could ill conceal. "Who would have thought," ſaid ſhe, breaking ſilence, "I ſhould ever have ſeen this day? Tell him that my fate has been long directed by him, that I will even renounce the engagements I have begun to form in this ſacred place. Spare me any further confuſion, and remember I am your ward."

The Count was charmed with ſentiments to which her manner without affectation gave a deeper impreſſion, and returning her thanks in the name of his friend; he forbore touching on the unfortunate iſſue of her ſiſter's marriage, any other than what could not be concealed, and

Chriſtiana

Chriſtiana could not refrain a tear of ſincere regret.

It was neceſſary to give ſome colour to this change in Chriſtiana's diſpoſition, which ſhould quiet the minds of the ſiſters; and that they might not think themſelves injured or ſlighted, the Count propoſed that the whole ſum which he had deliverd in truſt ſhould remain to the foundation of the houſe, and that under his authority of guardian he ſhould advance his claim to her perſon.

After a long ſtay, he took his leave, returning to Lorenzo, who was impatient to hear his ſucceſs. The Count repreſented the difficulties he pretended to have had, at length confirming all his hopes, and inſpiring him with renovated life.

It required much delicacy to withdraw Chriſtiana from the convent; but the rank of the Count, and the name of the Duke of Aragon overcame many difficulties, and after ſome preparation the day was fixed which was to give to Lorenzo the greateſt

bleſſing heaven has beſtowed upon man—a faithful friend in a virtuous woman.

It was but one ſtep from the convent to the altar, where in preſence of the Count, and two or three witneſſes, Lorenzo and Chriſtiana offered up their vows of fidelity before the Author of purity.

In a few days, the Count received a letter from Madrid, informing him of the birth of a ſon, which haſtened his return.

Lorenzo remained at Leon till the caſtle was ſufficiently in order to become a permanent abode; and then happy in the company of a woman ſo well formed to pleaſe, he retired to the tranquil ſhades of the foreſt, there to live uninterrupted by ambition, and undiſturbed by politics. He enlarged upon the plan of Don Raphael, and not wrapping himſelf up in the dark clouds of ſuperſtitious obſcurity; he threw open the gates of the caſtle, and invited the traveller to enter. His gardens, the foreſt, and the mountains were ever charming under all the variations of ſea-

ſon;

ſon; and when he choſe not to enjoy the beauties of nature, his library, which contained the choiceſt authors in Spaniſh and Italian, afforded him amuſement; and the elegant accompliſhments of Chriſtiana were an inexhauſtible ſource of ſatisfaction and pleaſure.

Don Raphael, who never conformed to the common actions of mankind, and who had been led into enormous crimes by the extravagance of his paſſions, not the badneſs of his heart, retired to the quiet receſs of a ſerene monaſtic eſtabliſhment, that he might repent his various errors. Yet not ſatisfied with the auſterity of devotion and frequent pennance, he cauſed his coffin to be made, and placed in his chamber, every night ſleeping in this ſad memento of diſſolution, till the imperceptible hand of death ſtretched over him, and he ſlumbered to awake in other realms of being.

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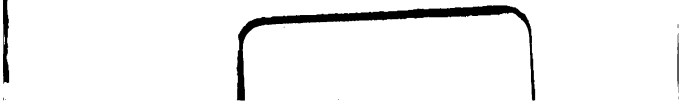
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